FROM TALWANDI

TO

NANKANA

550TH ANNIVERSARY OF BABA GURU NANAK

(April 15, 1469 AD to November 12, 2019 AD)

FROM TALWANDI TO NANKANA SAHIB

In the sacred memory of Guru Nanak and Rai Bular

This book is dedicated to my mother Qamar Munir Begum, born in Amritsar on January 01, 1934 and died in Nankana Sahib on April 02, 2013. She migrated to Nankana Sahib after her marriage to my father, Rai Bashir Bhatti, the 16th generation descendant of Rai Bular and the head of the Bhatti Family. My mother, a devout Muslim taught us (her children) to follow the footsteps of our ancestor Rai Bular and influenced me to return to Nankana Sahib from Los Angeles, California (USA), to serve the people and the land and keep the Nanak-Bular flame of love and respect burning and pass this torch on to our next generations.

Rai Aurangzeb Khan Bhatti
17th Generation Descendant of Rai Bular
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NOTE TO READERS: The preface in this book is unusually lengthy but it was necessary to set the spirit and purpose of this book. While there are many books on Guru Nanak's life and teachings, the overall connection with historic events in the 15h century and Guru Nanak's message on peace and co-existence is not emphasized in these books. It is my hope that readers will take the preface in the context of making these connections.

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CONTENTS

Introduction	3
About Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi (Nankana Sahib)	12
Birth of a Star - Guru Nanak	26
Enchanting Stories from Janamsakhis	37
Guru Nanak's Marriage and Employment	53
Guru Nanak begins his Sacred Journeys	64
Mughal War-Lords Invade India	99
Settling in Kartarpur and the Three Principles	106
Sikh Faith Post Guru Nanak's Death	112
Fall of the Mughals and Rise of the Khalsa	125
The British Rule Begins in Punjab	146
List of All Sikh Gurdwaras in Pakistan	165
Key Dates in Guru Nanak's Life and Sikh History	172
Timeline of The Mughal Dynasty	185
References of Rai Bular and Guru Nanak	190
Postface	193

Introduction

Human beings must be constantly reminded of our fragility and lessons from history. Today, 550 years after the birth of the great humanitarian Guru Nanak, human population is 7.5 Billion (ten folds more than in 1469 AD), resources are becoming scarce, and weapons of mass destruction are unimaginable and the global pot is bubbling with hatred, racism and bigotry.

In the 21st century, we live in a so-called 'connected and globalized world'. But that is a misleading statement as we only live in a 'connected and globalized economic world'. Our mindset, thinking, beliefs and behavior is still very much 'localized'. We may be connected commercially but we are disconnected ethically and morally. We are 'closer' but yet 'distant'. This is a dichotomy and the dilemma of our times. The danger of madmen using religion and race to persecute and inflict carnage on other humans is more serious than ever before. The most important task at hand is to transform the human mindset and align it with globalization of common ‘morals’ and 'ethics' - and not just commerce. This means turning the day-to-day conversation from 'local' issues and focus it on the 'global' threats and problems. When people focus only on their local problems, they don't see any urgency and importance for a broader global co-existence, harmony and peace. There is plenty of evidence of this dangerous mindset as we see conflicts, wars, destruction, misery and death all around on a daily basis.

Today, diverse religions, belief systems and cultures are playing a major role is the deepening narrow and ‘localized mindset’. Religion is being used to ‘divide’ and not ‘unite’ humanity. Instead of focusing on the severe threats that mankind is facing collectively as a species, humans are caught up in sectarian, racial and even financial divide. There are serious threats that are lurking around the corner to our common planet while humans are busy in their daily chores and ‘media manufactured compulsions’ to grab more power and land, sell more weapons, drill for more oil, chase after more money, buy more clothes, collect more materials, cut more trees for paper and furniture, become richer to seek ever more happiness, comfort and luxury. The three giant threats to our planet that stand out and need our immediate attention are; (1) Nuclear war, (2) Climate change and (3) Technological disruption.

If humans have to continue running the world and giving it meaning, it is imperative that our current narrow and selfish mindset is replaced by a broader and unselfish mindset for the sake of the survival of future generations and all of humanity. Nuclear weapons, Biotechnology and Artificial Intelligence threaten our very existence and if we are not serious in our resolve our planet will discard us much sooner than we think. The first step needed to correct this narrow thinking is that our leadership in all spheres has to acknowledge these threats as real and not perceived. Next, leaders of all nations, universities, colleges, religions and even heads of individual households must tell people under their influence over and over again to think 'global'. Without a global conversation on the future of humanity and the proactive involvement of parents, children and leaders of our society, humans will continue on a 'localized mindset' which clearly is on a collision course with the enormous transformation taking place due to rapid disruptive geographic and technological developments.

As in the 21st century, in the 15th Century, the world was witnessing rapid change as well but at a much slower pace than today. New Technology as well as new political thought was transforming the world. India specifically was experiencing numerous military external invasions and armed internal conflicts. At that time, the scenario was one of chaos and confusion. There were uninterrupted scenes of tyranny and bloodshed. India was utterly weak and disintegrated due to invasions and the constantly changing 'rules of survival'. The rich and powerful had lost all sense of justice and fair play. Like the present days, corruption was prevalent throughout the society. Power and position were bought and sold. The people were backward, ignorant, chained in superstitions and were conditioned to believe in prejudices. Big sums of money were spent on useless ceremonies. Thus the poor were becoming poorer and the rich even richer. Extreme Hindu rituals enforced by the rich and powerful holy men, called Brahmins were creating religious problems and social chaos. Hindu rituals and practices included idol worship, child marriage, burials of infant females, untouchability, caste system and sati (burning of wives upon the death of their husband) and many other such evil practices. Muslims invaders were not far behind in cruelty and were enforcing their will over natives which was mostly in deep conflict with their local beliefs and customs. It is in these times that a Saint was born in Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi in Punjab province of India. His name was Nanak and later became to be called

‘Guru Nanak’. The teaching of this Saint, Guru Nanak, addressed these problems of that time and focused people’s attention towards peace and harmony through living an honest and truthful life.

The timing of the birth of Guru Nanak corresponds to an age of inquiry, and discovery - not just only in context of our unexplored physical universe, but also in the context of discovery of the innermost nature of humans. Mankind was in search not only of what lay outside of them, but also in what lay inside – their soul. Being the contemporary or near contemporary of many great people in the 15th century, Nanak played his role in the beginning of the age of discovery and exploration. So many inventions happened between 1430 and 1500 AD that it is mind boggling. Some of these inventions are the Musket, Graphite pencil, Telescope, Microscope, Gregorian Calendar, Printing Press (1439, 1453 by Johannes Gutenberg), Spinning Wheel, Knitting Machine, Scissors, Thermometer and among others the Lateen-Sails-rigged ships that the European long-distance sea explorers used.

The ‘Lateen Sail’ became the favorite sail of the Age of Discovery, mainly because it allowed the Ships to tack "against the wind" thus making it possible for Europeans to reach Asia and America’s by Sea.

In 1453 AD, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, Constantinople was conquered by the Ottoman Army, under the command of Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II. With this conquest, Ottomans became one of the most powerful Empires. With the fall of Constantinople to the Muslims, the land route to Asia for the Europeans became much more difficult and dangerous. Fortunately for the Europeans, the printing press was adopted in Europe and scientific knowledge began to spread rapidly in printed form. As early as 1480 AD, there were printers active in 110 different places in Germany, Italy, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, England, Bohemia and Poland in Europe. From that time onwards the printed book was in universal use in Europe. Soon the advanced ship-building skills, lateen sails, compass, telescopes, printed maps and other navigational tools became common in Europe and navigators started applying these tools to find sea routes from Europe to Asia as well as to America. The Portuguese, British, Dutch, Spanish and French started vying to establish long-lasting colonial empires in Asia and America’s. Christopher Columbus crisscrossed the Atlantic Ocean against the ocean winds to reach the Americas on behalf

of King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, in October 1492 AD. Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese explorer reached Calicut, India by Sea in 1497 AD. His initial voyage to India was the first link of Europe and Asia by an ocean route, connecting the Atlantic and the Indian oceans and therefore, the West and the Orient. Vasco Da Gama's discovery of the sea route to India around the African 'Cape of Good Hope' was significant and opened the way for imperialism in India for the Europeans. In just under a century, other European powers, namely the Dutch Republic, England, France and Denmark, were able to challenge Portugal's monopoly and naval supremacy in the Cape Route. The British landed in India in Surat (in the Gujrat province) for the purpose of trade in 1608 AD and set the stage for a major upheaval in India's future.

The 15th century was indeed unique and hosted many great men destined to discover new lands, people, ideas and technology that transformed life. Among the most notable were Ferdinand Magellan, Leonardo Da Vinci, Oda Nobunaga, Iranian Philosopher Mullah Sadra, Ottomon Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, Niccolo Machiavelli, Michelangelo Buonarroti, Nicolaus Copernicus, Martin Luther, William Shakespeare, Montaigne, Erasmus, John Calvin, Mughal Emperor Babur, and Sebastian Castellio and Guru Nanak among others. Nanak not merely witnessed the birth of new empires and the discovery of new lands and sea-routes but led the protest against established religion and caste bound dogma and social habits of man.

On one hand great things were happening in the 15th century but at the same time tyranny and bloodshed were becoming the spearheads of new conquests and colonization of new territories. There were countless wars going on - The Hundred Years' War in Europe, War of Roses, Ottoman Turks wars in Byzantine, Wars between the Khanates of Crimea and the Turks and Invasions of India by the Sayyids, Afghans and then Mughals to name a few. When tyranny and bloodshed were becoming the spearheads of new conquerors' in this region, Guru Nanak had the courage to travel on foot all over the continent with a message of peace and harmony. His discourse with Emperor Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire in India, had a huge impact on the governance and administrative policies of the empire. Babar, Humayun and Akbar's enormous success in ruling as Emperors of this vast 'multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious' territory of India was partly attributed to

the teachings of tolerance and co-existence by Guru Nanak. Thanks to the genius of Nanak, he did not merely accelerate the reform in religious and social conduct of individuals, but also planted the germ of reasoning, love, hope, co-existence, self-expression and fulfilment in the rulers as well.

Rai Bular, the ruler of the land where Nanak was born is to be given due credit in nurturing and launching Guru Nanak on his mission. It was Rai Bular who first observed the incredible events surrounding the young boy Nanak and became his ardent patron, protector and supporter. According to Janam Sakhi accounts, Rai Bular perceived the Divine in Guru Nanak and became his 2nd devotee, the Guru's sister being his first. This gives Rai Bular, a devout Muslim himself, a special place in history and mankind's slow yet persistent journey to seek eternal peace, practice truthful living and generously share the gift of life with all others on our small planet – which we often fondly call 'spaceship earth'.

Guru Nanak passed his entire childhood and learning young age in Talwandi with his Hindu parents and a Muslim elder named Rai Bular. It is in Talwandi where Guru Nanak's character and personality took shape. The bond of friendship, trust and love between Rai Bular and Guru Nanak became a hallmark for interfaith discourse for all times to come. A young Hindu boy and a Muslim elder and their mutual respect for each other set a solid example for humanity to transcend all religions and beliefs. "Be humans first and then become a Muslim or a Hindu" quickly became the talk of the Talwandi town and all surrounding areas.

The message quickly spread throughout the region. `Tolerance' began to Conquer `Intolerance' and people began to travel from far of places to Talwandi to listen and learn about peace and harmony from the young teacher, Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak thus became the founder of what is known as the 'Sikh' faith today.

Rai Bular's 17th generation still thrives on the very same land where Guru Nanak was born, played, sang and meditated. Perhaps it is for Guru Nanak's prayers that even today, the legacy of Rai Bular Bhatti still lives on after five centuries. True, Rai Bular and Guru Nanak disembarked at their destination after their journey on spaceship earth

to make room for the next generation of passengers some half a millennium ago, but the torch carrying their dream and message is still lit and is vibrant. It is hardly a surprise that Rai Bular's descendants recognizing the enormous responsibility that Rai Bular has left them with are anxious to step up and do something and not stay on the sidelines to promote peace and harmony among all humans. No power can so beneficially divert, or so properly direct and fix the attention, enlist our feelings, arouse our patriotism, and awaken the energies of the mind, as the legacy of our ancestors. Thus assembled in the birth-place of our ancestors in Talwandi (Nankana Sahib), in honor of their memory, I cannot but feel an anxious wish, a laudable desire, to strive to emulate their virtues, and prove worthy of a portion of their fame; and as the remembrance of my ancestry begets mutual love, respect and good-will, I am disposed to entertain kindlier feelings toward our fellow humans.

I am a Muslim by faith as were both my parents. My late mother was a saintly woman with a kindest of heart. In our house the name of Nanak and his deeds were mentioned very frequently. As a child, perhaps because of the special relationship of my ancestry with Guru Nanak, we were told bedtime stories of Nanak's childhood. Some of these stories were so artistically and beautifully narrated by our elders as well as the local bards in our village that the imagery became etched in my mind forever. Their generation had carried history in form of stories passed from generations and telling these stories to children was a favorite past-time and a bedtime ritual. So much so that young Nanak seems like a personal friend who we energetically ran around and played with. The intelligent, kind and humorous side of Nanak's personality as a boy resonated with us and pleased us immensely. That is how Guru Nanak became my lifelong friend. In the stories I used to imagine walking with him through the forests, playing village games and chasing each other around the water well, herding cows, singing songs, giving money to fakirs and otherwise just being a pure young innocent, wholesome and carefree child.

I believe that I have a responsibility to bring alive Guru Nanak and Rai Bular's dream and wishes – a dream of propagating universal love and peace, to elevate humanity above religions, to teach and to learn from others the importance of co-existence and harmony. I am writing this story to pass on to my future generations what was passed on to me by

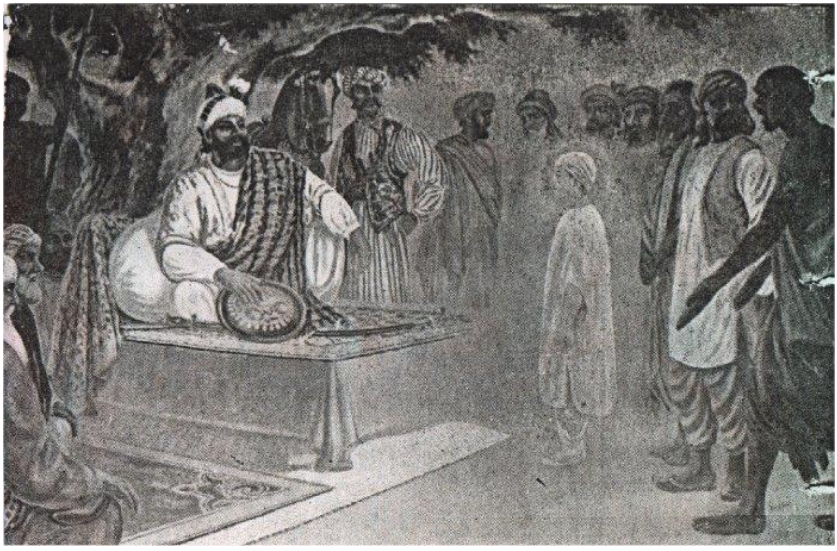
my elders - of the role we have as human beings who perceive, make decisions, laugh, and cry, in this great fresco of the world. Who are we, in this boundless and glowing world after all? "We," human beings, are first and foremost the subjects who do the observing of this world, the collective makers of the values and the composers of photograph of reality. We are nodes in a network of exchanges through which we pass images, tools, information and knowledge to the next generation of the world that we perceive. We are situated within it and we pass on to the future generations what we teach, learn and do today. As our collective knowledge has grown over the centuries, we have learned that our being is only a part of the universe, and a small part at that. This has been increasingly apparent especially during the last century with new scientific discoveries. Before the Hubble telescope and the Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP), the NASA Explorer that made stunningly accurate measurements of our Universe, we used to believe our planet was at the center of the universe, but sadly it is not. We also thought that we existed as unique beings, a race apart from the family of animals and plants, and independent from their fate – but we now have discovered that we are all inter-dependent. If trees and bees disappear, so will we. We are like a child who in growing up realizing that the world does not revolve only around us, as we thought earlier. We must learn to be one among nature. There is yet a lot of learning to do and a lot of wisdom to seek.

In the process of writing this story, I have researched history books, articles and other material, and interviewed elders in the Rai Bular bloodline and outsiders who are living today in different parts of the world. Together with all my collective information, I have put this material together for readers. One of my goals is to educate the Muslim and Sikh youth on history in order to present a truer narrative of Sikh and Muslim relations in hopes to bring the next generation closer. I am also playing my role in the continuation of the fantastic stories that my elders have told nightly around bedtime and campfires for over 500 years validated by any research material I could find. It is also the continuation of something else: of the gaze of my ancestor Rai Bular in the first light of day from the Dhaular Mound in Talwandi looking at his fields, scrutinizing and deducting from the details of reality in order to pursue something that I can't see directly but I can feel and follow the traces of. Rai Bular thinking to himself and in his full awareness wondering if God will be kind to him and if he will find what he is

seeking, and that somewhere out into the future, his descendants will remember him and tell his story. This is the nature of man and the story of continuation. My hope is that when you read stories of Guru Nanak in this book, you too will develop an equal amount of fondness and love for the extremely intelligent, enchanting, humorous and kind boy that Rai Bular became very fond of and came to love and cherish.

Rai Aurangzeb Bhatti
17th Generation of Rai Bular
Nankana Sahib (Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi)

"As fragrance dwells in a flower,
And reflection in a mirror,
So does God dwell in every soul;
Seek Him therefore in Thyself "
- Baba Guru Nanak



Rai Bular, the ruler of Talwandi is enchanted by young Guru Nanak

The word 'Sikh' means to learn in Punjabi and the word `Guru' means the Knowledgeable – or the one who is learned. The two words 'SIKH' and 'GURU' are interrelated having their origin in the ancient indigenous language of Punjab. Literally, 'Sikh' means a learner or a student, as in Punjabi language saying "Kuch Sikh Lao". 'Guru' means a teacher or a guide. In the late 17th century when the British rule began to take hold in India, the British gazetteer classified the term 'Sikh' under religions of India and it has become more specific as a proper noun since. 'Sikhs' officially referring to a member of the Sikh religious community. The word *'Guru' however has become more general as a common noun, referring to any expert in any specialist field, e.g. education, economics, religion or politics. However, when the Sikhs use the word Guru, it refers specifically to the ten spiritual masters of their faith led by Guru Nanak).*

ABOUT RAI BHOE DI TALWANDI (NANKANA SAHIB)

Guru Nanak's life story begins in Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi, a small town, situated about sixty Kilometers to the West of Lahore and twenty Kilometers from the river Ravi to its south. The town lies in the most fertile verdant plains of the Punjab, Pakistan. The present name of the town is **Nankana Sahib**.

Before partition of the Indian sub-continent in 1947, the town was a part of India. The existence of a huge mound popularly known as Dhaular (royal palace) spread over approximately half a million square-yards next to the town has traces of its ancient habitation almost 1,000 years old. There was a very old drinking water well at its foot to its north called 'Sitawala', with deep drawn out flight of steps built in heavy lime masonry leading to its spring level to provide cold spring-water bath to the residents of the palace. Any further excavation of the mound to trace its past history has not been possible as almost the entire mound is covered with Muslim graves and tombs and it is considered a sacrilege to dig up the graves.

This is how Michael MacAuliffe (also known as Max Arthur MacAuliffe (b.10 September 1841, d. 15 March 1913), a senior Sikh-British administrator, prolific scholar and author and most importantly respected as a renowned historian for his translation of Sikh scripture and history into English describes Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi;

"About thirty miles south-west of the city of Lahore, the capital of the Punjab, and on the borders of the present civil districts of Gujranwala and Montgomery, stands the town of Talwandi, deep in a lonely forest. It is on the margin of the Bar or raised forest tract which occupies the center of the Punjab. The town is still girdled by a broad expanse of arbore scent vegetation, which, when not whitened by the sand blown by the winds of the desert, wears through all seasons a cheerful appearance. The Jal (Salvadora Persica) predominates, but there are also found the Phulahi (Acacia modesta) and the Jand (Prosopis spicigera). The wild deer is seen occasionally to appear startled at the travelers who disturbs the solitude of its domain, and the hare and the partridge cower cautiously among the thickets, deprecating molestation."

The earliest available documented reference to the town before MacAuliffe falls about in the early 15th century, when the Lodhi Pathans ruled over northern India. Bahlul Khan Lodhi was the chief of the Pashtun Lodhi tribe and founder of the Lodhi dynasty from the Delhi Sultanate. He came into power upon the abdication of the last claimant from the previous Sayyid dynastic ruler. Bahlul Lodhi became ruler of the Delhi Sultanate on 19 April 1451 AD. He reigned until 1488 AD.

People of India in the 15th Century

Between 1206 AD and 1526 AD, Hindustan, as India was called at time by the Dehli Sultanate, was constantly being invaded for her riches by invaders from the North. Each invader overthrew their predecessor and established their throne in Delhi. First there was the Sultanate of the Mamluk dynasty founded by Qutb al-Din Aibak. It lasted from 1206 AD until the defeat of Shamsuddin Kayumars in 1290 AD by Jalaluddin Khilji, the founder of the Khilji dynasty. The Khilji Dynasty lasted until 1320 AD when Qutbuddin Mubarak Khilji was defeated by Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq (Ghiasuddin Tughlaq) giving rise to the Tughlaq Sultanate.

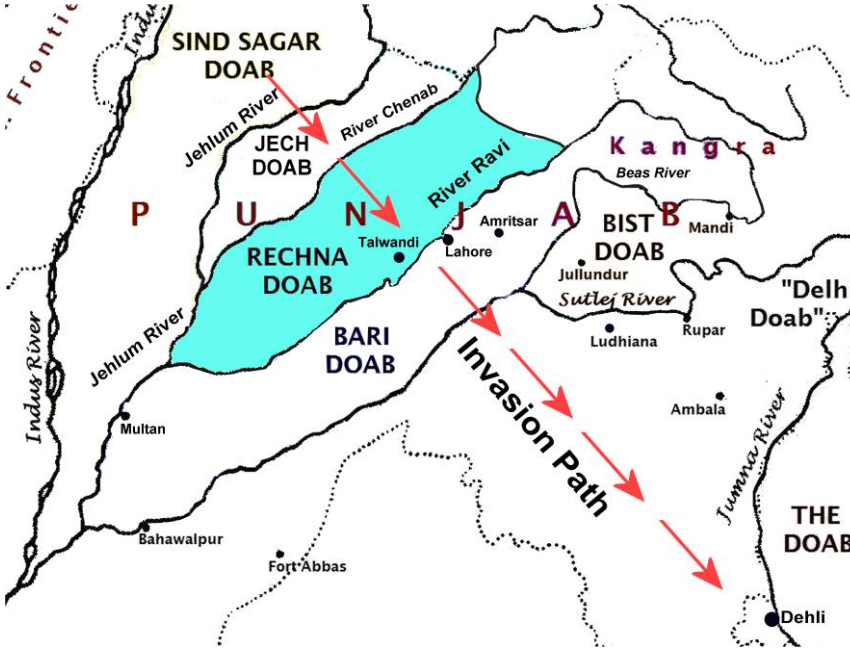
The name 'India' is derived from the word Indus, which originates from the Old Persian word Hinduš. The latter term stems ultimately from Sanskrit 'Síndhu', which was the name of the Indus River as well as the country at the lower Indus basin (now Sindh, in Pakistan). The ancient Persian Emperor Darius-I conquered Sindh in about 516 BCE, upon which the Persian equivalent Hinduš was used for the province at the lower Indus basin. The word 'Hindu' was first used by him for 'people who lived around the river Indus'. Thus the word 'Hindu' had nothing to do with the religion Sanatan Dharma (The eternal way), and it got attached to the religion much later.

The Indus Valley Civilization refers to the ancient civilizations of Harappa (2600 BCE) and Mohenjodaro (2500 BCE), located on the Indus River and one of its tributaries, the River Ravi in present-day Pakistan. In the late 1820's, a British explorer in India named Charles Masson stumbled across some mysterious ruins and brick mounds, which turned out to be the first evidence of the lost city of Harappa (approx. 100 Km South of Talwandi). Thirty years later, in 1856 AD, railway engineers found more bricks at that location, which were carted off before continuing the railway construction. In the 1920's, archaeologists finally began to fully excavate and uncover the sites of Harappa and Mohenjodaro. The long-forgotten Indus Valley civilization had, at last, been discovered. The word 'Punjaab' stems from Punj (5) and aab (rivers), the five major tributaries of the River Indus.

In 1398 AD, Amir Timur (Tamerlane) the Turko-Mongol Persianate conqueror invaded Northern India, attacking the Delhi Sultanate at that time ruled by Sultan Mahmud Shah Tughlaq of the Tughlaq dynasty. Taimur had spread anarchy and devastation over Northern India. A dynasty by the name of Sayyids (so called as they consider themselves to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad) became Taimur's allies and aspired to rule in Delhi in Taimur's name. Sayyid Khizr Khan ibn Malik Suleiman who had been appointed the Governor of Multan by the famous Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq to govern that area defected and allied himself with Timur. Timur ordered him to march against Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud Tughlaq to take possession of Delhi in 1414 AD. Nasiruddin abdicated the throne and Sayyid Khizr Khan became the Sultan of Delhi and the Sultanate. He ruled as the founder of the Sayyid dynasty until his death in 1421 AD and his son took over. In 1451 AD, Bahlul Khan Lodhi overthrew Alam Shah of the Sayyid dynasty to establish the Lodhi dynastic rule in Northern India. The Lodhi dynastic rule ended with the defeat of Ibrahim Lodhi in 1526 AD at the Battle of Panipat by Zahir-ud-din Babur, the warrior chief with a bloodline of both Chengiz Khan and Amir Timur. This marked the end of the Lodhi Dynasty and the rise of the Mughal Empire in India led by Babur (1526–1530).

This wave after wave of invasions and a virtual merry-go-round of dynasties went on for almost 350 years (from 1206 to 1526). In this period, five dynasties invaded, ruled for an average of 50 years and perished into the dust of history forever. During these invasions and

resulting battles, violence, death and destruction became a ‘new normal’ for the natives and living in peace simply became an illusion.



Invasion Corridor of Mamluks, Khilji’s, Tughlaq’s, Sayyid’s, Lodhi’s and the Mughals

Ibn Battuta, the famous Moroccan Muslim traveler left extensive notes on the Tughlaq dynasty rule in his travel memoirs. Ibn Battuta arrived in India through the mountains of Afghanistan in 1334 AD at the height of Tughlaq dynasty's empire. In his memoirs about Tughlaq dynasty, Ibn Battuta recorded the history of the 7 year famine from 1335 to 1342 AD, which killed thousands upon thousands of people near Delhi, while the Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq was busy attacking and suppressing rebellions. The Sultan was unforgiving and extremely tough on both non-Muslims and Muslims who rebelled against him. As Ibn Battuta writes;

“*Not a week passed without the spilling of much Muslim blood and the running of streams of gore before the entrance of his palace. This included cutting people in half, skinning them alive, chopping off heads*

and displaying them on poles as a warning to others, or having prisoners tossed about by elephants with swords attached to their tusks".
- Ibn Battuta, Travel Memoirs (1334-1341 AD, Delhi).

The 'Dehli Sultanate' comprised of five Turko-Afghan dynasties who ruled from Delhi from 1206 AD to 1526 AD. These five dynasties were the Mamluk (1206–1290), the Khilji (1290–1320), the Tughlaq (1320–1414), the Sayyid (1414–51), and the Lodhi (1451–1526).

The path for these invasions from the North was cut through by a corridor approx. 60km wide. The corridor traversed first the Jech Doab (between River Jhelum and River Chenab), Rechna Doab (between River Chenab and River Ravi) and Bari Doab (between River Ravi and River Beas) – in almost a direct straight line connecting Kabul to Delhi. This corridor has an ancient history connecting Delhi to Northern India passing from Amritsar towards Lahore and Peshawar in Pakistan, finally terminating in Kabul, Afghanistan. Chandragupta Maurya first built his passage along this ancient route called Uttarapatha in the 3rd century BC, extending it from the mouth of the Ganges to the north-western frontier of the Empire. Further improvements to this route were made under Ashoka, the grandson of the founder of the Maurya Dynasty, Chandragupta Maurya. It was rebuilt many times under Sher Shah Suri around 1542 AD, and the Mughals and the British along a partly similar route later. The old route was re-aligned by Sher Shah Suri to Sonargaon and Rohtas. The highway was considerably rebuilt in the British period between 1833 and 1860. The Rajput rulers of small estates of Punjab in the path of these invasions were constantly being courted by each successive invader in order to win over their alliance, loyalty and logistics support. The loyalty pledge of alliance was frequently rewarded by generous land grants and protection. Those who put up resistance and were defeated in battle were offered to convert to Islam and pledge loyalty to the invading Sultans. In return they were granted safe passage to a large fertile land parcel. The most generous parceling out of Punjab's fertile land in the Rechna Doab was to the Bhatti Rajput clans by Allauddin Khilji (ruled from 1296 AD to 1316 AD) after his victory over the Rajput lords in Eastern Punjab. Among the recipient chiefs was a Muslim Rajput, the father of Rai Bhoe Bhatti, whose holdings amassed 50,000 Acres of fertile land 60km south of Lahore on the banks of River Ravi with its center in Talwandi. Indian history is vague of the exact dates and places but generally the area between Sialkot and Jaisalmer

was thought to be the stronghold of the Rajput's around 1300AD. As the renowned British historian and expert on Indian History, John Keay states in his book 'History of India'; *"Histories of India often begin with a gripe about the poverty of the available sources. These sources were once thought as inadequate as to make what is certainly one of the world's longest histories also one of its most patchy."*

Rai Bhoe Bhatti

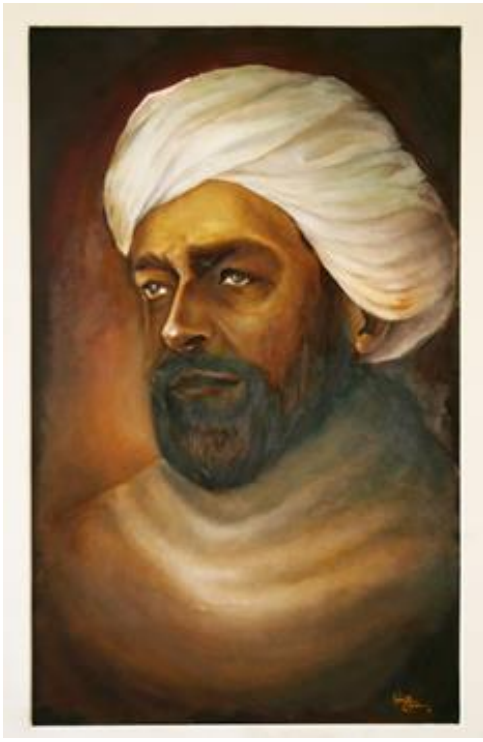
Another historian, Professor R.C. Majumdar in the 1950s writes; *"Prior to the thirteenth century AD, we possess no historical text of any kind, much less such a detailed narrative as we possess in the case of Greece, Rome or China."* Professor Majumdar cited the thirteenth century because that was when northern India, succumbing to Muslim rule, attracted the attention of invading partisan writers keen to chronicle the triumphs of Muslim conquests.

But given a good four thousand years of earlier pre-Islamic civilization, it followed that for more than 80 per cent of attestable Indian history there were no histories of India, Prof. Majumdar further states; *"It is difficult to give a rational explanation for this deficiency, but the fact admits of no doubt."* Rational explanations apart - and there have been many, most supposing an Indian indifference to treating antiquity as an academic discipline - this dearth of ready-made chronicles and memoirs weighed heavily on the historians. This lack of history handicapped the reconstruction of past events and prevented presentation of them in an acceptable narrative. Happily the situation improved considerably over the last one and half-century. New ancient chronicles have come to light and much new research has been undertaken and also other disciplines have made important contributions.

Through discovery and deduction, stories passed on by generations in and around Talwandi and Kartarpur, additional fortuitous finds and the

painstaking analysis of archeological remains, the documentational void has been gradually filled. One history book points out that Talwandi was much more ancient and some say was originally built by the Rajput King, Raja Vairat. It was reclaimed and renamed by Rai Bhoe as 'Raipur' and finally was rebuild and renovated by Rai Bular to honor his father Rai Bhoe and also renamed as 'Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi'. After Rai Bhoe's death his estate passed on to his only son, Rai Bular, who governed the vast area at the birth and during Nanak's youth and middle-age.

As the sole heir of Rai Bhoe, Rai Bular's inherited estate holding spanned a vast area circling and spanning from present day Mandi Faizabad, Mangtawala, Bucheke, Shahkot and Warburton. Although it lay right in the path of the marauding invaders who made regular forays into Hindustan (India) from Afghanistan and Central Asia, under Rai Bular, Talwandi was a prosperous little town with agriculture produce markets as its main commercial strength.

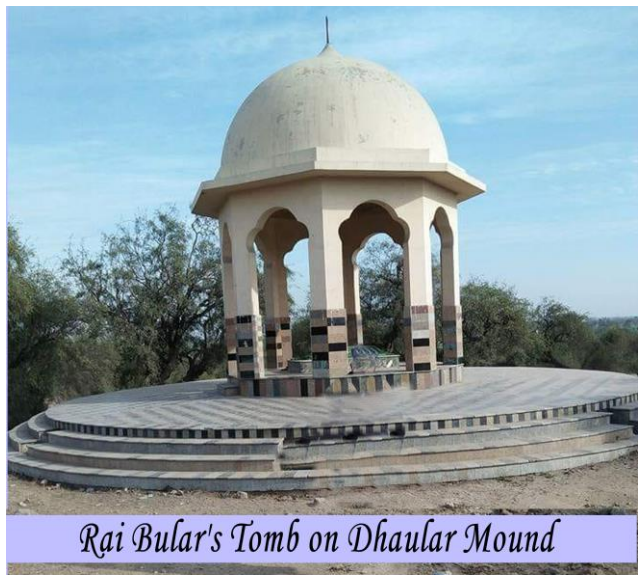


Rai Bular Bhatti of Talwandi (1427 – 1515 AD)

Rai Bular Bhatti and his family alone inhabited the ancient Dhaular Fort, while his tenants dwelt in the town of Talwandi on the plain. It is in this little town, Talwandi where Nanak's miraculous life story begins and as such Talwandi (modern day Nankana Sahib) is regarded as the Janam-Sakhi heart-land. The house in which Nanak was born is at a short distant from the Dhaular Fort. The town has now lost its old name, and is known as Nankana Sahib, in memory of the religious teacher to whom it had the honor of giving birth. 'Nankana' means Nanak-ka-Ana or

‘Arrival of Nanak’ or as Rai Bular would proudly mention his town to others as ‘Nanak—ayan’ (home of Nanak) and ‘Sahib’ being just Persian epithet of respect. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the first to official register the town as ‘Nankana Sahib’ in his official records.

Rai Bular’s Tomb on Dhaular Fort overlooking Talwandi (Nankana)



Rai Bular’s Tomb and Grave on Dhaular Mound

The whole of the present town of Nankana Sahib now lies between Gurdwara Janam Asthan and Gurdwara Kiara Sahib—a total length of almost two kilometers, with a width of half a kilometer only and the main centers of its population of about fifty thousand live between Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Bal Lila and Mal Sahib. Surprisingly, the town has not grown much in geographic size but has become congested and crowded due to the population growth. Before the partition of India in 1947, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were almost equally represented in the town but since partition it is almost entirely a Muslim town. Dhaular Fort is located adjacent to the town and at the top of the mound is the grave of Rai Bular Bhatti.

Rai Hussein Haveli in Kot Hussein Khan - one of the several Villages built
by Rai Hussein Khan Bhatti (b.1869 - d.1949) on his Ancestral Lands.
Rai Hussein was the 15th Generation Direct Descendant of Rai Bular Bhatti.

Haveli of Rai Hussein (15th Generation) in Kot Hussein Khan

Nankana Sahib, the Town Of Gurdwara's (Sikh temples)

Very little activity occurred in Talwandi after Guru Nanak's death in 1539 AD. Almost 55 years after his heath, Guru Arjun - the fifth of the Sikh Gurus (1563 – 1606 AD) visited Talwandi sometime between 1595 and 1599 AD, where he discovered Kalu's Kotha (the house of Mehta Kalu, where Guru Nanak was born) and other places associated with Nanak's early life. Guru Hargobind, (1595 – 1644 AD) the sixth Guru, came to pay his homage to the place in 1621 or 1622 AD. During his visit

Guru Hargobind stayed in the village off Rai Isa Khan Bhatti's father (Rai Rehmat Bhatti, the 5th Generation descendant of Rai Bular) who had just completed building a new village dedicated to his young son Rai Isa Bhatti. That village still exists approx. 5 Km from the Town of Nankana Sahib. No Gurdwara existed at that time and the places built by Rai Bular in his lifetime where Nanak's memories were kept alive were just small raised platforms in brick huts which were kept clean and lighted at night by some devotees of the Guru. Later a class of people called 'Pujaris' took up the work as their regular profession utilizing the offerings made at these places for their sustenance. When the Sikh religion had gained more prominence under Guru Hargobind, there was a temple erected on the spot where Guru Nanak was born.

The next historical reference to Talwandi is in 1818-19 AD when Maharaja Ranjit Singh after his conquest of Multan came to the town. It is said that Ranjit Singh renamed the town to 'Nankana Sahib' and ordered the construction of several memorial buildings now called 'Gurdwaras', which means 'the door that leads to the Guru'. Within the temple is installed the Granth Sahib, or sacred volume of the Sikh faith, intoned by a professional reader. Ranjit Singh then ordered the removal of all usurpers and encroachers from the large estate of approx. 20,000 acres (twenty thousand acres) that had been gifted to Guru Nanak by Rai Bular. This estate was formally attached to the Gurdwaras for their maintenance and for 'Guru Ka Langar' (Guru's community kitchen). This control of land to the Gurdwaras, as we will discover later, made the job of Hindu Mahants and Pujaris extremely lucrative and resulted in their firm hold on the income from that land.

Nankana Sahib now is a town of Gurdwaras (Sikh temples), the most important of these being the 'Nanak's Ayan' called **Gurdwara Janam Asthan** or Birth Place of Nanak. It was earlier known as Kalu's Kotha (Room of Kalu). Pandit Gopal's Pathshala, where Nanak had his first schooling is at present known as **Gurdwara Patti Sahib** and is about 150 yards to the south east of Janam Asthan. Approx. 50 yards beyond that, is **Gurdwara Bal Lila**, that commemorates the place where as a boy, Nanak enjoyed the company of his playmates and cast on them a soft spell with his novel games and sweet and melodious talks. These three Gurdwaras were originally constructed under orders of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, when the latter visited Nankana Sahib on his return from Multan after its conquest in the year 1818 – 1819 AD.

Gurdwara Janam Asthan or Birth Place of Nanak.

Gurdwara Patti Sahib

Gurdwara Bal Lilah

Besides these three, there are other Gurdwaras in Nankana Sahib that are sacred to the memory of the Guru Nanak. At Nankana, every place with which Nanak had any association is deemed sacred. Two of these

Gurdwaras, **Gurdwara Mall Ji Sahib** and **Gurdwara Kiara Sahib,** commemorate Nanak having worked as a herd-boy to his father's cows.

Nankana Sahib is the most sacred city for over 40 million Sikhs in the world as it is the location of the birth of the Sikh founder, Guru Nanak. The following is a brief description of Nankana Sahib Gurdwaras;

1) **Gurdwara Janam Asthan,** Nankana Sahib - This site is 'Janam Asthan' meaning 'Place of Birth' and childhood home. A room was first built here by Guru Nanak's son. The one room structure was known as 'Kalu Da Kotha', literally 'house of (Mehta) Kalu'.

2) **Gurdwara Bal Lilah,** Nankana Sahib - This site is connected with adventures of the early childhood of young Nanak. It is about 300 meters from Janam Asthan. When Guru Nanak left Talwandi to go on his journeys, Rai Bular missed him so much that he built a small room on the spot where Nanak used to close his eyes and meditate while Rai Bular watched over him. In affectionate remembrance of the childhood of Nanak, Rai Bular also built a small water tank at the spot where Nanak used to play with other children of his own age. This water tank was enlarged by Kaura Mai, the Diwan or financial minister of Zakaria Khan, who was satrap (provincial governor) of Lahore. Kaura Mai was an enthusiastic admirer of Guru Nanak, and lent his material support and political influence to the amelioration of the condition of the Sikhs. Later on a beautiful Gurdwara was built at that place and is now called **Gurdwara Bal Lilah** or 'The Child's Playground'.

3) **Gurdwara Patti Sahib,** Nankana Sahib - 'Patti' means 'Alphabet' and this is the site where Guru Nanak learnt the various different languages and particularly the alphabets of these languages.

4) **Gurdwara Mall Ji Sahib,** Nankana Sahib - This site is connected with adventures of the early childhood of the Guru in particular the events linking to Rai Bular's discovery of young Nanak's divine qualities.

5) **Gurdwara Kiara Sahib,** Nankana Sahib - This site is where, as a youngster, Guru Nanak used to graze cattle. It is at a distance of about 1.5 Km from the Janam Asthan about two kilometers to the east of Gurdwara Bal Lila Sahib. It commemorates an event connected with the early years of Guru Nanak. While tending his father's herd of cattle, it was common for him to let the animals roam freely while he himself sat engrossed in meditation. Once a peasant complained to Rai Bular that Nanak's cattle had damaged the crop in his field, but when the field was inspected, no damage was discovered.

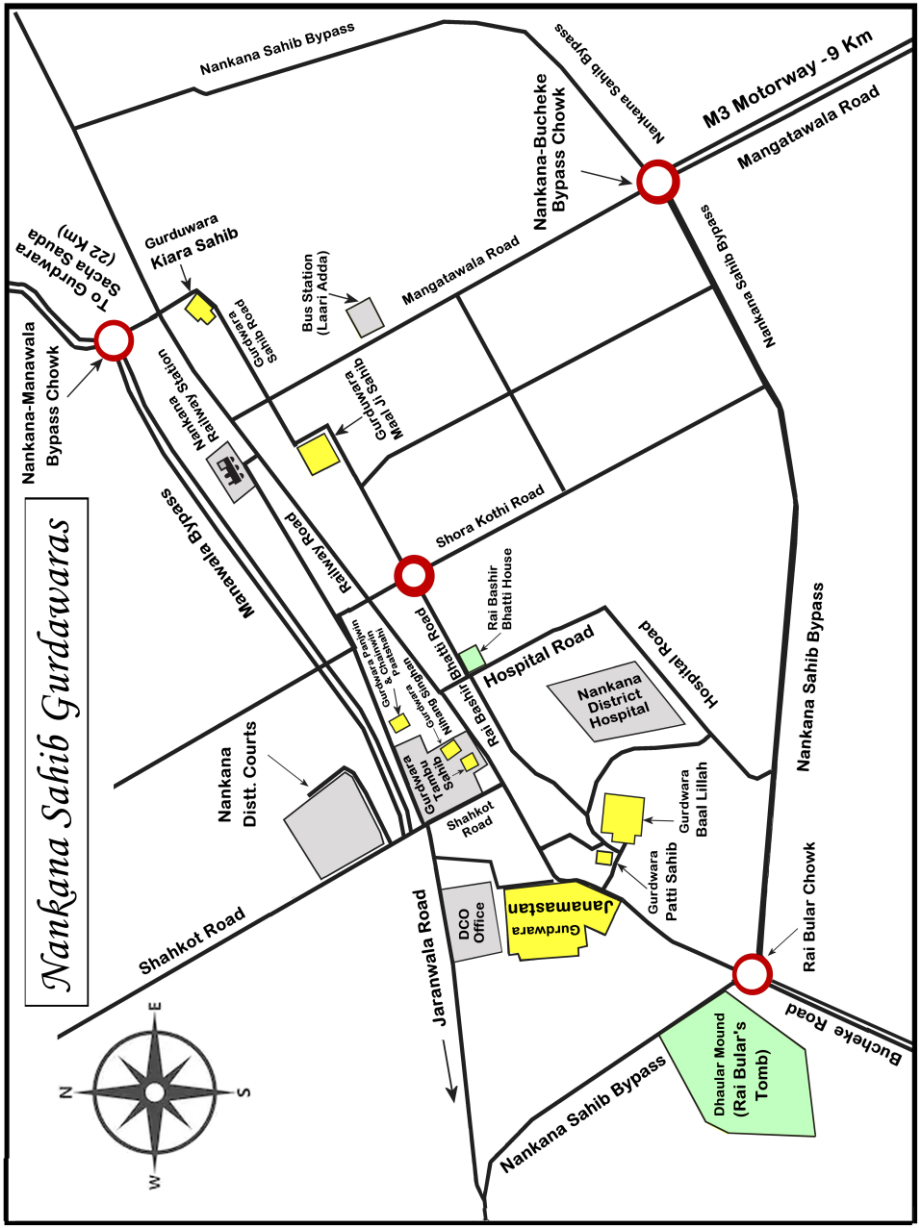
6) **Gurdwara Tambu Sahib,** Nankana Sahib. Once Guru Nanak's father, Mehta Kalu, gave him some money and sent him to Chuharkhana, a market town, to do business. Instead, Guru Nanak had fed hungry villagers with the money and came back fully satisfied with what he had done. Only as he neared Talwandi, did he realize the possibility of his father's displeasure and rebuke. Hesitant to face his father's anger, Guru Nanak hid himself under a large van tree whose branches touched the ground making it look like a Tambu (tent) until discovered and taken home. This Gurdwara is in memory of that event.

7) **Gurdwara Panjvin and Chhevin Patshahi,** Nankana Sahib. Both of these historical shrines are situated near Tambo Sahib on the road leading towards Janamashtan Nankana Sahib. The shrine of the 5th Guru (Panjvin), Guru Arjun Dev is without a dome whereas the sacred shrine of the 6th Guru (Chhevin), Guru Hargobind has been built with dome. Both the shrines have a common boundary wall. The sixth Guru came to visit Nankana Sahib in 1613 AD (some sources say the visit was in 1620-21 AD) while returning from Kashmir.

8) **Gurdwara Nihang Singhan,** Nankana Sahib. This Gurdwara is situated in between Gurdwara Tambu Sahib and Gurdwara Hargobind Sahib. Young Nanak used to play, sing and meditate in this area when he was a child.

9) **Gurdwara Sacha Sauda,** Chuharkhana (Near Nankana Sahib). This Gurdwara is situated at a distance of approx. 20 miles from Nankana Sahib. Guru Nanak as a young man was sent by his

father Mehta Kalu with 20 Taka's (Silver Coins, Tanka's, Rupees) with hopes to encourage his son to do business. On the way the young Nanak came across a village where people were sick, hungry and without food. The Guru Nanak decided to use the money to provide food, water and clothes to the villagers. Kalu was very annoyed when Nanak explained to him that as he saw it he had done a very good deed, feeding the starving villagers, and gaining the best profit one could gain from the money. He had done a real 'Sacha Sauda' (most truthful trade). Rai Bular was very touched and agreed with Guru Nanak's logic. He gave Rs. 20/- to Kalu to compensate him and pleaded with him not to be angry with Nanak as he was a wise and blessed child.



Rai Bhoe-Di-Talwandi (Nankana Sahib) occupies an area of 2.0Km x 1.0Km.

BIRTH OF A STAR - GURU NANAK

Guru Nanak was born in Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi on 15th of April 1469 AD during the middle of Bahlul Khan Lodhi's reign. Guru Nanak's father, Mehta Kalyan Das, more popularly known as 'Mehta Kalu' was the agent and Chief Accountant of Rai Bular, the head of the Rajput Bhatti clan. Guru Nanak's mother was Mata Tripta, a simple, pious and extremely religious woman. Nanak had an elder sister, Nanki, who deeply loved and cherished her younger brother. Rai Bular's land holding and records were managed by his trusted accountant 'Kalu'. Kalyan Das was a Hindu of the Khatri caste (Kshatriyas) and belonged to the Bedi clan. He lived in this peaceful, quiet and secluded town of Talwandi with his family alongside other Muslim and Hindu families. Mehta Kalu had added the practice of agriculture to this avocation. He owned some landed property and a small herd of cattle to augment his income.

(Note: There are a number of sources where Guru Nanak's birthday is supposed on October 20, March 14, and November 24. There is no doubt Guru Nanak was born on 15th April 1469 but his birthday is celebrated on full moon following Diwali. When Sikhs became a force, the Hindu Brahmins came forward in Sikh guise and took control of the Sikh religion. Most of the Sikh history is written by Hindu Brahmins, who while writing Sikh history, distorted much of it to justify placing the Sikh faith as a Hindu sect and so the birthday celebration dates vary).

In the Sikh Bulletin of November-December 2018 following two articles appeared: **IS GURU NANAK'S PARKASH DAY DIFFERENT FROM GURU NANAK'S BIRTH DAY? YES, IT IS. By Harbans Lal, Ph.D; D.Litt. (Hons) and Ek Onkaar Kaur Khalsa Michaud and IS GURU NANAK'S PARKASH DAY DIFFERENT FROM GURU NANAK'S BIRTH DAY? NO, IT ISN'T. By Karminder Singh, PhD (Boston).** Lal and Michaud accept that "...prominent historians such as Gyani M.A. Macauliffe, Hew McLeod, Kahn Singh Nabha, Indu Bhushan Banerji, Khushwant Singh, Kirpal Singh, Ganda Singh, Harbans Singh, H.R. Gupta, Principal Satbir Singh, and others accept April (1469) as the date of the birth of Guru Nanak. Thus, April 2019 will be Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary. The global Sikh community is preparing in various ways to celebrate this auspicious day. But, they say, "However, Guru Nanak's birth day is not the same as his Prakash day." They continue to write that "at his birth, Guru Nanak's destiny

to spread Divine Wisdom was not recognized either by his parents or the community around him; with the possible exception of Rai Bular who was the landlord of Talwandi, the town where Guru Nanak was born. Nevertheless, they do admit that "Only Rai Bular recognized his wisdom from the time of Birth." They continue to say that "the nine Gurus who followed Guru Nanak and the Guru Panth (Sikh community throughout the world) have traditionally celebrated Guru Nanak's birthday on Vaisakhi in a variety of ways. The celebrations included spiritual services as well as holding of conferences, teaching retreats, and launching of new books or other initiatives."

Although the era was one of religious intolerance and persecution, Rai Bular appears to have been the very reverse of a bigot. In his little realm he had ample time for reflection on the conflicts and contradictions between religions and the resulting violence – between form and function, between what people believed and what they practiced.

The sister of Nanak was the first to observe some sort of divineness about her younger brother Nanak. Even at the age of seven, Nanak surprised his elders with the sublimity of his extra-ordinary knowledge about many things. He astonished everyone with his eloquence in explaining deeper truths about man and God and composed an acrostic on Punjabi alphabet giving divinely inspired interpretation to each letter as he spoke and sang of one God and his love for Him.

Nanak was very unique child. God had provided Nanak with a contemplative mind and rational thinking. His emotional intelligence was extraordinary and his capacity to be aware of, control, and express his emotions, and handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically immediately made him stand out. This quality together with his amazing talent for articulation, music and poetry, mesmerized everyone who came into contact with him. Stories of his intellect quickly flared up all around Talwandi. When the acts of Nanak reached Rai Bular, the chief of Talwandi, and when he heard of Nanak's piety, intelligence and learning, Rai Bular felt a mysterious interest in this clever and precocious son of Kalu.

Rai Bular, who at that time did not have any sons of his own, quickly developed a fatherly love and affection for young Nanak. Rai Bular felt a strange sort of bright Aura emanating from Nanak's eyes, an Aura of

kindness and friendliness that pulls and attracts others to friendship. Nanak's poetry was rich and his music and melody somewhat cast an irresistible spell on all those who listened to him. Rai Bular became so fond of Nanak that he longed for Nanak to be by his side all the time and bestow him the caring, love and affection that a father would to his own son. The beauty with which Nanak sang had Rai Bular and others around him shake their heads in disbelief and admiration. Nanak's poetry and songs soon became a regular feature at Rai Bular's home. The Hindus of the village were amazed and the Muslims were astonished. Both communities were convinced that Nanak was destined for higher places.

Nanak was an extremely energetic and positive-minded child. He had the softest smile, kindest face and absolutely captivating eyes. It is said that his affable personality with ***his bright and loving eyes would pull you towards him like a magnet.*** *He had a strong inclination towards Compassion, Kindness, Empathy and other Humanitarian acts – and that became his Aura – his perfume.*

Guru Nanak passed his entire childhood and young age in Talwandi under the influence of his parents and Rai Bular. Nanak found great joy in his poetry and singing and this enthusiasm spilled over to other spheres of his life as well. He reached out to the people of Talwandi and became less of an introvert. Each town used to have their own local musicians – usually from the 'Mirasi' or 'Musalli' (Muslim Sheikh) cast. The Mirasi were a caste of hereditary minstrels (musicians who sang and recited lyrics and heroic poetry with a musical instrument especially for the nobility) and it was also the Mirasi's who preserved historic facts in form of lyrics and poetry which augmented genealogists to trace heritage. *(This tradition of preserving history was an ancient tradition as it was the only convenient and practical means to pass history to future generations before writing tools and books became available. The Scythians brought this tradition in form of Vedic Sanskrit Hymns to India around 1700 BC or approx. 3,700 years ago – ref: John Keay, History of India).*

The Mirasi's in Talwandi, as in other towns would entertain the rulers as well as the people on functions and events by 'singing history' and reciting lyrics. Bhai Mardana was a Mirasi at Rai Bular's court. He was a

daily feature at Rai Bular's evening relaxation gatherings sitting around a campfire entertaining guests. Together with young Nanak, Mardana would play his instrument whenever Nanak sang. Soon Nanak and Bhai Mardana became a team and synchronized their talents. Even though Bhai Mardana was ten years older than Nanak, he became a close companion and friend. Nanak began to visit Mardana's home more often to participate in the singing of devotional songs and practicing his talent.

Nanak's mother would often hear Nanak singing while he bathed and was pleasantly surprised at the sweetness of his voice. People discovered to their surprise that Nanak had a sense of humor and that he had the wonderful ability to laugh at himself. As a son, he became more devoted to his parents than ever before as time went by. He anticipated his father's every need and ran errands for him without being asked to. The parents were amazed at the transformation in their son but Tripta was a little afraid too. "He laughs and he sings all day. I have never seen him so happy and I am afraid that someone will cast an evil eye on him." "Do not ruin the happiness of the present with imaginary fears about the future," her husband advised. "If it is God's wish that this happiness should come to an end, there is nothing we can do to prevent it. Let us enjoy it while it lasts and thank providence that it was given to us, even if only for a short time."

Mehta Kalu decided that while singing, meditation and spirituality were fine, what his son needed was some sound education. 'Come Nanak,' he said, 'I think it's time you started school.' A good education, he must have thought, would keep the boy from getting into mischief, spiritual or otherwise! And so Nanak was sent to the Talwandi School where the local Pandit doubled up as a teacher. No sooner had Pandit Gopal started with the Devnagari alphabet than Nanak composed an acrostic—a poem in which the letters of the lines spell out a message—with all the thirty-five letters of the alphabet on his Patti (Patti's were wooden tablets on which a kind of liquid chalk was used to write and they were widely used in the medieval ages). Nanak also told Pandit Gopal that each letter stood for God the creator, and existed only to praise his creation and was actually useless otherwise. The amazed teacher knew that this was no ordinary child. It was soon evident that Nanak knew more than his teacher about many things. He even composed a poem for his teacher describing what true learning should

be and how it should revolve round the name of God and His omnipresence. Pandit Gopal thought best to send Nanak to Pandit Brijlal who was more spiritually inclined and was a brilliant Sanskrit teacher. However, even the Sanskrit classics that Pandit Brijlal taught were easy for Nanak and he soon outdistanced his master.

Now, with both the pundits having failed to hold his attentions, Nanak's father was at his wits' end as to how to keep him occupied and prevent him from wandering off on his own as he so often wanted to do. Nanak was frequently found in the company of Sadhus, Sufi's and Saints who happened to stop at Talwandi on their journey.

All this did not please his parents at all. Kalu expressed his concern to Rai Bular who then called Nanak and encouraged him to study Persian. For this a Muslim Maulvi, Maulvi Kutb-ud-din was retained in Talwandi by Rai Bular. Since Persian was the language of administration, Rai Bular believed that it would become useful to Nanak when he was old enough to take up a job, perhaps as the village accountant. Amazingly Nanak quickly mastered Persian and was soon composing poems in perfect Persian about the temporary nature of man's existence in the world. The stunned Maulvi Kutb-ud-din realized he too had nothing to offer since the boy already knew most of what he was going to teach. Nanak was then just nine years old.

Guru Nanak learning Persian from Maulvi Kutb-ud-din

Nanak was very healthy and active boy. He liked to run about and play with other children of his age and had quite a number of playmates. All of them were fond of him and regarded him as their leader, and followed him around and readily agreed with him in all matters. A unique quality that Nanak had was that he never quarreled with anyone. Moreover, if he found some of his friends quarrelling and fighting, he would intervene and mediate to make them stop and become friends again. Since Nanak was very fond of his playmates, he used to take them to his house quite often. His mother, Mata Tripta was a kind-hearted and generous lady. She loved her son's playmates equally and would bring out a plate full of sweets and Nanak himself gave the sweets to his companions. He took great pleasure in serving others in this way. He would say; "Such acts please the God who loves us all".

There was a pond of clear water near their house. It was surrounded by a green grassy plot and some trees. Nanak was very fond of this place. Sometimes he would go near the pond, all alone, and sit there for hours, with half-shut eyes, thinking of God all the time. Rai Bular often used to watch young Nanak thus engaged in divine meditation. Rai Bular's fondness and love for Nanak grew with each passing day. With time, a new trait of Nanak's personality was revealed. Whenever a beggar, a needy man, a sadhu or a fakir called at the door, he would run into the house, take hold of whatever article of food or clothing he could get and deliver it into the hands of the beggar.

Rai Bular was completely spellbound by Young Nanak and their relationship quickly transformed into a father – son relationship. He bestowed his love upon Nanak as if Nanak was his own son. Whenever Young Nanak got into trouble with Metha Kalu, Rai Bular stepped in and encouraged Metha Kalu to have patience with Nanak as Rai Bular said "Nanak was not an ordinary child but a highly gifted child with Divine Qualities and a higher purpose". Both Nanak's sister and Rai Bular were ardent advocates & supporters of young Nanak and would defend his actions vehemently.

Nanak continued to amaze everyone with his kind acts and spiritual knowledge all through his growing years. He constantly astonished his teachers and his family with his tremendous grasp of spirituality by

composing spiritual hymns and songs. His command over several languages too was remarkable even at that tender age.

Nanak was born to a Hindu family, but even as a young boy, he revolted against the religious trappings, appurtenances and especially the caste-system of Hinduism. When Nanak turned eleven, following the Hindu tradition, Nanak was called upon to put on the sacred thread by the family priest Pundit Hardyal. This day is called Upanayanam or Janeu when the priest, amidst all the chanting mantras and many grandly attired relatives and friends gathered puts the sacred thread around the wrist of an adolescence boy. Nanak refused to allow Pundit Hardyal to carry out the ritual and told him to stop. When asked why, Nanak replied; "What use is this thread? Why do I need to wear it?' Nanak said that "the thread could do him no good and would be burnt with the body on his death. If it was at all necessary to wear one, let it be spun out of the 'Cotton of Mercy' and 'Yarn of Harmony' with twist and knots of truthful and temperate living". This was an extremely profound statement coming from an 11 year old boy. And when the priest told Nanak that the sacred cotton thread was a symbol of his high birth and lineage, Nanak came up with this gem of a poem:

"Out of the cotton of compassion
Spin the thread of contentment
Tie knots of continence; give it the twist of truth.
Make such a sacred thread for the mind (soul)
Such a thread once worn will never break
Nor get soiled, burnt or lost
The man who weareth such a thread is blessed."
(as narrated by Raja D. Singh and J. Singh in the 'The Great Humanist Guru Nanak')

The entire congregation was stunned by Nanak's refusal to wear the thread. Nanak explained to the congregation, saying it was no more sacred than the cotton from which it was spun; that it would decay, break and would be left behind when the wearer died. On the other hand, he believed that a life lived with compassion, contentment and truth were the true symbols of a high lineage. He asked the priest; "if you have one such thread, put it on me". Despite their dismay, those gathered felt there was indeed some truth in what Nanak had just said. Nanak didn't stop there but further went and asked the priest;

"Thou buyest a thread for a pice
And seated in a plastered square,
Puteth it around the neck of others
Claiming an inheritance of holiness
Thy thread helps neither here nor here after."
(as narrated by Raja D. Singh and J. Singh in the 'The Great Humanist Guru Nanak')

'And so how holy or helpful could this thread really be when it was of no use then or after death?' It is evident that even at that age Nanak was able to perceive the difference between empty symbolism and actual spirituality. He was also very confident of the truth of his convictions. As he grew, he demonstrated his determination to defend his belief in 'Humanity Comes First before Religions' by refusing to participate in all other religious rituals and customs of any religion and at the same time fearlessly criticized hypocrisies in all religions, - Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism etc. He was not only questioning the blind faith in ancient rituals but also questioning the holy men who were perpetuating it. Nanak was equally unhappy about the way some Muslim preachers or Mullahs preached intolerance and fanaticism in the name of religion, which often led to bloodshed, tyranny and oppression of those who did not accept Islam. He condemned rampant corruption and exploitation, which was a common feature of both ruling Muslims and the Hindu priestly class. He declared himself as belonging to neither Hindus nor Muslims but the whole human race, and as God's servant he was going to teach all of mankind, wherever and whenever he could, the very fundamental fact that 'All Humans are Equals'.

Guru Nanak left his Legacy in the **Janam-Sakhis** (birth stories) that have been handed down through the centuries. Janam-Sakhis are historical relics, and hold a continuing role facilitating and conditioning Sikhs' relationships with Guru Nanak and the Panth (community). In addition, they are social narratives, and are a shared discourse about how Sikhs choose to commemorate and honor Guru Nanak, conveying interpretations of his life as relevant to their own and acting in accordance with that interpretation.

Young Nanak was particularly critical of the Pundits, Mulla's, Priests and

Rabbi's etc. for placing more emphasis on form, rituals and collection of money using the religion begging bowl and not focusing on function and practice. He encouraged dialogue and discourse among the religious teachers to remove misunderstandings and unwarranted conflicts. By doing this at a very young age, he not merely accelerated the reform in religious and social conduct of individuals, but also planted the germ of reasoning, love, hope, co-existence, self-expression and fulfilment in the rulers of the time as well. This made him one of the pioneers and champion of Interfaith Harmony.

Prof. Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD (Institute for Understanding Sikhism, Quebec, Canada) in his article quotes from Joseph Davey Cunningham, the author of the book History of the Sikhs (1849) and an authority in Punjab historiography. Cunningham reported from a Persian manuscript, **Siar ul Mutakharin** that "Nanak was carefully educated by **Sayyid Hasan** and he also studied the most approved writings of Muhammadans and learned all the earthly sciences from Khizar, i.e. the prophet Elias". He emphasizes that Guru Nanak was a well-educated and keen observer of the nature, the universe, and human behavior from an early age. In his adult life, he took long voyages to have intellectual discussions with the heads of various religious centers and institutes to promulgate his philosophy.
Guru Nanak promulgated his philosophy by his keen observations about the Cosmos, Environment, Nature, and behavior of Animals and Humans.

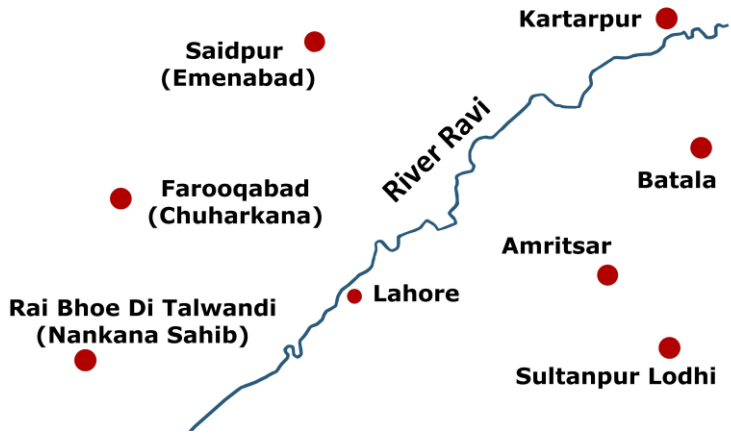
MARRIAGE OF BIBI NANKI TO JAI RAM

Bibi Nanaki was Nanak's elder sister. She had an immense adoration for her brother and was the first to recognize his "enlightened soul". She was 5 years older to Nanak but played the role of a mother to him. She not only protected him from their father's anger but she loved him unconditionally. Bibi Nanaki is known as being Guru Nanak's first follower. She was eternally devoted to him and his cause and she also is known for inspiring Nanak in using music as an instrument of devotion to God. Knowing that her younger brother had musical talent she bought him his first Rabab (musical instrument) to help him further his music.

Sultanpur Lodhi was then the capital of the Jalandhar Doab in Punjab and was ruled by Daulat Khan Lodhi. At that time and up to the period

of British occupation, land revenue was generally collected by the revenue officers called 'Amils', who were basically surveyors and appraisers. Amils were dispatched from the capital to different districts by the Sultan. Amil Jai Ram was appointed to appraise the revenue demand of the Talwandi region. He thus interacted frequently with Rai Bular, the landlord of Talwandi. While one day surveying Rai Bular's cornfield, Jai Ram observed Nanaki (the elder sister of Nanak), drawing water from a well, and saw that she was fair to look upon. Jai Ram expressed to Rai Bular his desire and hopes to marry Nanki. Since Rai Bular approved of Jai Ram as a kind and suitable choice for Nanki, he used his influence with Mehta Kalu to arrange the marriage between them. After their wedding in 1480 AD, Bibi Nanki went with her husband to live in Sultanpur.

When Nanak turned 15, Nanak would frequently visit his sister in Sultanpur where she would elevate his confidence and encourage his independence. It was Bibi Nanki who discovered and befriended Mata Sulakhni, the future wife of Guru Nanak. Bibi Nanaki had no children of her own and later when Nanak got married and had children, she gave all her love to Nanak's children. She helped raise Nanak's two children, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Chand together with Nanak's wife.



Most of Guru Nanak's early life travels were in cities located around the River Ravi. In 1450's, River Ravi was flowing adjacent to Rai Bhoe-Di - Talwandi and over the past 550 years, river has gradually changed its course moving further south due to frequent floods.

ENCHANTING STORIES FROM JANAMSAKHI'S

Nanak was an extra-ordinary and different child in many ways. When he was only a boy, Rai Bular observed that Nanak possessed very unique and unusual qualities. These qualities surfaced in a series of events that occurred one after the other that left everyone puzzled and bewildered.

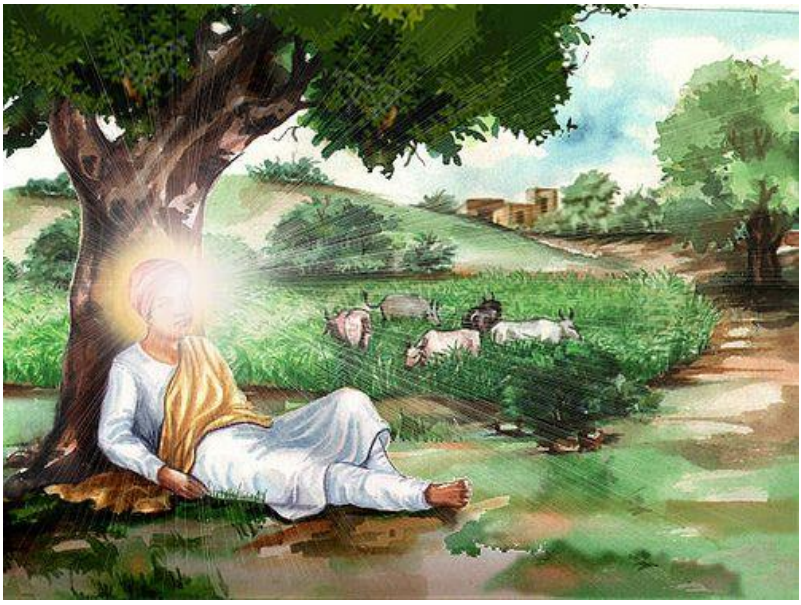
THE STORY OF WANDERING COWS

As part of his responsibility, Nanak was required to take the family owned herd of cows to the open fields nearby. He usually led his cows to the nearby open pasture grounds, where they would graze, while Nanak sat under a shady tree absorbed in thoughts and meditation. Nanak had to look after the herd while they grazed and keep the livestock away from his neighbors' crops. He had to make sure the herd stayed out of the wheat fields and rice paddies, or disturb any of the other crops on which the farming community depended to sustain their living.

One day while the cattle were grazing Nanak was lost in his thoughts and fell asleep. His cattle strayed into a neighboring field and started grazing on the ripening crop. The buffaloes freely roamed and ate as well as trampled the wheat crop. The owner of the field, who had worked very hard to raise the crop came around on his usual inspection and was enraged beyond measure at the site of unattended cows ravishing his crop. Seeing his crop of wheat being demolished, the owner woke Nanak up and cried, "Nanak, why have you ruined my field? I have lost everything I worked so hard for". Nanak got up and said; "Nothing of yours has been ruined. What harm is there in a buffalo putting its head down to graze? God will make it a blessing for you."

Totally outraged, the owner began to argue with Nanak and decided to take the matter to Rai Bular, the ruler of the area. Quarrelling all the way the two went together to Rai Bular. Once they reached Rai Bular's place many other people from the Talwandi gathered around as well and one of them said; "Nanak is simple-minded, What can you say to him!" Rai Bular summoned Kalu and said to him, "Kalu, your son has been very careless. Rebuke him for he has ruined this man's crop. You must make restitution for this damage and loss." "What can I do", replied Kalu. "He wanders around like a mystic living in his own world." Then Nanak spoke. "Nothing has been ruined in the field". "Everything

in my field has been ruined" exclaimed the owner of the field." I have been robbed of 5 months hard work - give me justice". "Not a single blade of grass has been eaten nor even broken" said Nanak. "Send some men to see for themselves and confirm what I am saying".



Rai Bular sent his men to inspect the field. When they reached the field they found that not a blade of wheat had been harmed. They were astonished and returned to Rai Bular with their report. The person made in charge of the inspection reported, "O' Rai Sahib, no damage has been done to the field at all". Hearing this Rai Bular was extremely relieved and declared the owner of the field was incorrect in his accusation. Rai Bular then dismissed the farmer jesting that perhaps his eyes were failing him and Nanak's herd had not wandered into his field at all. Mehta Kalu was equally relieved and shaking his head, Kalu berated Nanak for all the trouble and excitement he had caused admonishing him to watch the animals entrusted to him more carefully in the future.

News of this incidence spread throughout Talwandi and soon to other areas around Talwandi. Many people went to confirm the event with the farmer who kept swearing up and down that he was not out of his mind and his eyesight had not betrayed him either. He reported to the Rai exactly what he actually saw. The people went to see the crop for

themselves and were astonished to witness firsthand a fine ripening crop. This is one of the first events that publically highlighted Guru Nanak's divine attachment to the all mighty God of mankind and nature.

Certain that he had witnessed a miracle, Rai Bular gently suggested to Kalu not to get angry at Nanak and that perhaps his son, Nanak had been born for some other purpose in life than that of being a cowherd.

Rai Bular gently suggesting to young Nanak's father Mehta Kalu that he should not get angry at Nanak because Nanak was a highly gifted and spiritual soul.

Gurdwara Kiara Sahib, Nankana Sahib - This site is where, as a youngster, Guru Nanak used to graze cattle. It is at a distance of about 1.5 Km from the Gurdwara Janam Asthan.

The Cobra Snake giving shade to the sleeping Nanak

On one hot summer day Rai Bular was on his way home with his men when at a distance he spotted a large Cobra snake. The snake had its hood spread as it swayed very slowly from side to side. This was unusual because cobra species as we all know are poisonous snakes and spread their hoods briefly while under threat and when they are ready to strike. As Rai Bular slowly approached the gently swaying snake, Rai Sahib discovered little Nanak all curled up and motionless under the shade of the Cobra's wide open and large hood. Rai Bular was convinced that Nanak had been bitten and was either unconscious or even dead, as he was thus lying absolutely motionless. Rai Bular was puzzled as to why the snake was still there with its hood wide open swaying as if it was protecting something even after it had bitten Nanak.

He cautioned his men to stay absolutely still as he began to dismount from his horse and take action when the cobra saw him and retreated and then slithered away quietly. Rai Bular approached the boy and tenderly shook him by his shoulder. Nanak woke up rubbing his eyes and a welcome smile for Rai Bular. The Rai kneeled down and quickly inspected Nanak for any snake bites and asked him if he knew of the presence of the Cobra but Nanak replied that he was unaware.

Other children of his age would have shown some signs of fear, alarm and panic, but Nanak was as calm as one can be. After observing the tracks of the large Cobra snake all around the sleeping Nanak, Rai Bular and his men concluded that the snake had been there for a long time, and much to Rai Bular's disbelief, had been actually trying to shade the

sleeping boy from the sun's harsh rays and not harm him. Rai Bular's staff was also stunned by this astonishing scene.

Young Guru Nanak asleep while a Cobra gives him shade from Sun

The fact that the snake had been protecting Nanak's face from the sun made Rai Bular's heart fill with wonder and joy. When Nanak got up he dusted his clothes and Rai Bular embraced him and kissed his forehead. This was yet another miracle that Rai Bular witnessed in a short period of a few weeks. From that day onwards he began to give Nanak the respect only given to great Saints. He acknowledged the miraculous powers of Nanak, and hurried to congratulate Mehta Kalu. Rai Bular called Kalu and told him that Kalu must no longer be displeased with Nanak for his indifference to worldly affairs as Nanak was to become a very great man. Truly, that prophecy in time did come true.

Gurdwara Mall Ji Sahib in Nankana Sahib – This site is connected with adventures of the early childhood of the Nanak in particular the event of the Cobra giving him shade from the hot Sun.

THE STORY OF THE TREE'S STATIONARY SHADOW

On another occasion, Rai Bular was returning home after Hunting and while passing a field he happened to observe someone sleeping under a tree. Rai Bular noticed that the tree under which the person lay was the only tree whose shadow appeared to have remained stationary, and not veered around like the shadows of the other trees with the sun's passage as if the tree was, by design providing shade to the sleeping person. Amazingly the shadows of the other trees had moved, but the shadow of that particular tree remained stationary. "Wake him," said Rai Bular. "Let us see who it is." When they came closer they discovered that it was Kalu's son Nanak.

Rai Bular had already been a witness to some other mystical events associated with Nanak. He approached Nanak, held and kissed his hand and turned around to his people and said; "I have seen what happened just a few days ago when Nanak was being protected by the deadliest of all snakes, the King Cobra. Now this also I have witnessed. It is not without meaning. There is something of God's grace in this."

Rai Bular returned home and when he arrived he summoned Kalu and said; "Kalu, do not maltreat your son Nanak no matter what he says or

does. He is an Exalted One and it is for his sake that my town exists. You also are blessed, Kalu, for it is as your son that Nanak has been born." Kalu was overwhelmed and replied; "The ways of God are known to God alone."

A Jal Tree, gnarled and maimed by the centuries, is still pointed out at the scene of the former mysterious event. It possesses a thick trunk, is still gratefully giving shade, and its venerable branches bend to the earth in a fashion that suggests the pillared shade of the Indian Salvadora oleoides. The tree is now called 'Thamb Sahib' (or holy trunk). A wall has been built around it for its protection.

The Sacha Sauda (A True Bargain)

In the summer of 1484, Nanki and Jai Ram came on their annual visit to Talwandi. They were overcome with happiness at the atmosphere that now prevailed in the Bedi household. Guru Nanak had turned fifteen yrs. old and Bibi Nanki was especially happy to see a bond developing between her father and her brother and she prayed that this state of affairs would prevail. However, a few weeks later, uncertainty began gnawing at Mehta Kalu's heart again. He could not imagine his young son herding cattle for the rest of his life. He knew Nanak was an intelligent, hardworking, honest and sincere boy; surely life had better things in store for him? Besides, he was disappointed that Nanak's mind was not into farming and other worldly affairs, therefore, he thought perhaps engaging him in trade would be a good profitable profession, and secondly his son would be happy all day talking to his clients about his business. He hoped that Nanak would be willing to try his hand at something more challenging. He turned once again to Rai Bular for advice. It was decided that Nanak should be provided with an opportunity to try his hand at business.

Rai Bular and Kalu convinced Nanak to embrace a mercantile life. Within walking distance of Talwandi was the little town of Chuharkhana (modern day Farooqabad). On market days Chuharkhana became a center for the purchase of essential commodities like salt, rice, wheat, oil, soap, turmeric and other spices as well. Traders from nearby villages flocked to Chuharkhana to buy these at wholesale prices and sell them in their villages for a small profit.

Rai Bular and Kalu drew up a plan to enable Nanak to take advantage of

this opportunity. They decided to give Nanak 20 Taka's (Silver coins used during Bahlul Lodhi's rule. 20 Taka's or Tanka's were equal to twenty rupees) for his first business venture. Kalu turned to Nanak and said; "Go to Chuharkhana, my son with Bhai Mardana. Buy the commodities that you think are most in demand and bring them back to Talwandi so that we can earn some profit." Bhai Mardana was asked to go as his escort with instructions; "Go with Nanak. Buy and bring some genuine goods for selling in Talwandi from which we may make a profit. In this way if you make a profitable transaction, next time I will send you both with more money to buy goods". Nanak was excited and happy to comply with his father's instructions and took his mission seriously. He studied the local market of Talwandi to assess the commodities most in demand and the prices they were retailing at. He drew up a list and decided the quantity of each commodity that he would buy in Chuharkhana for the 20 Taka's (from some sources 20 Tanka's). In those days this much money was considered a minor fortune.

On the next market day, Nanak sought his parents' blessings and set for their journey on foot towards Chuharkhana to purchase their merchandise. There was a flush of excitement on Nanak's face. He was determined to carry out this business as successfully as he was carrying out his duties as a cowherd. He would make his father proud by earning a handsome profit. As the two hurried towards Chuharkhana it flashed in Nanak's mind an image of his father declaring to his friends: "My son is a successful businessman. I am truly proud of him."

The road to Chuharkhana skirted a forest but there was a much shorter path that cut directly through it. It was a bright, sunny morning and by the time they reached the outskirts of the forest, the two were perspiring profusely. The shady path running through the forest, with its overhang of tall trees, beckoned them. It was an invitation that Nanak found difficult to resist. "Let's take that path, Bhai Mardana; the trees will protect us from the strong sun. Not only will we reach sooner but we will also be spared much discomfort." Mardana hesitated. They were carrying a large sum of money and they ran the risk of being looted by robbers. It would be embarrassing to return to Talwandi and admit that they had lost their money. Mardana also worried on another account. He knew there would be ascetics and holy men camping in the forest and his friend Nanak would be drawn to them like a moth to a flame. Mardana was sure they would be debating philosophy long after the

market hours of Chuharkhana were over. They would cut sorry figures if they returned to Talwandi without having transacted any business on their first day. "No, Nanak, let us stay on the main road. It is not safe to go into the forest with the money we have," he cautioned. "Who is to know that we carry so much money? It is safely hidden in my belt". Nanak said. Besides, "who would dare to confront a big, tough Mirasi like you?" He smiled at his friend and with one quick stride, turned off the road onto the path, leaving Mardana with no option but to follow him into the forest. They had hardly gone a few kilometers from Talwandi when they came across a small village. The village looked abandoned. Mardana suggested that they stop for a short rest and also quench their thirst. When they entered the village, they were shocked. People were lying on the floor as if almost starving. Some were reaching out to the two with open arms crying for water. There was a stench of death, sickness and an outbreak of disease due to lack of water as their water wells had become contaminated.

Guru Nanak's piety could not resist and he said to Bhai Mardana, "Father has asked us to carry out some profitable transaction. No bargain can be more truly profitable than to feed and clothe the needy. I cannot pass on this opportunity for this true bargain. It is seldom that we get a chance to carry out some profitable transaction like this". Nanak sensed Bhai Mardana stirring restlessly beside him as he was reminding Nanak of the purpose of their mission. Nanak was reminded over and over again by Mardana and urged to move on to proceed to Chuharkhana in obedience to his father's instructions. Nanak, however, was not to be thwarted in his new objective. With tears in his eyes and a sorrow filled heart Nanak left the village and started to walk faster towards the market. No amount of thirst or sweat from the heat and humidity could slow him down. Mardana followed as a loyal servant and friend keeping pace. They remained perfectly quiet and reached Chuharkhana by mid-day, when the sun beat fiercely down upon the market place.

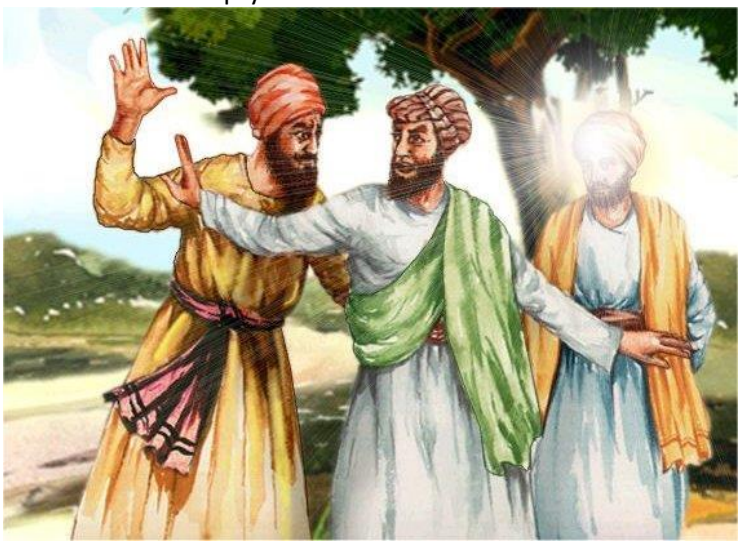
Nanak went about his purchases quickly disregarding the list he had prepared and Mardana was puzzled to see him buying clothes, flour, millet, pulses, and even perishable vegetables which were available in plenty in back in Talwandi. He looked at Nanak and said; "Nanak, we will not earn any profit if we trade in these commodities. You should stick to your list and buy what is not available in Talwandi". Mardana was

dismayed when Nanak replied; "Don't worry, my friend. We will earn a far greater profit than you have ever dreamed of. Trust me". Of course Mardana was not convinced at all but held his peace. The sun was on the decline when they finally finished their shopping. Burdened with their purchases, their progress through the lengthening shadows was slow but this time Mardana was glad when Nanak once again chose the shorter path through the forest. When they reached the small village where they had earlier stopped for water, Nanak, stopped and started distributing the clothes and food among the villagers. He and Mardana had even carried with them a heavy bucket full of water all the way from Chuharkhana which Mardana had thought was drinking water for their journey back.

When Mardana realized what his friend was doing he panicked. Nanak's father would never forgive them, especially Bhai Mardana and he would be held responsible, for had he not been sent as much to keep an eye on Nanak as to assist him? He reached out and gripped his friend's wrist firmly and shook his head as Nanak turned to him enquiringly. But Nanak only smiled and gently released his hand. He turned once again to the villagers and said; "God has seen fit to end your misery. He has sent you some food, clothes and water." Mardana sighed in resignation. The deed was done; there was no going back now. They would have to face the consequences. After distributing the food, clothes and water to the villagers, the two said a last farewell to the astonished and thankful villagers and walked quickly out of the forest onto the main road leading back towards Talwandi.

Meanwhile in the Bedi household the day had been one of huge excitement. The success of Nanak's venture would prove to be the turning point of his life. Nanaki and Jai Ram, who were visiting at the time, were sure that Nanak would be able to strike a fine balance between his quest in the spiritual world and the pursuit of a profession that would earn him respect. As the hours lengthened and the boys did not return, Mehta Kalu grew increasingly impatient. He and Rai Bular went up the ramparts of the Dhaular fort from where they could see the countryside for miles around. It was the height of summer and even at six in the evening there was bright sunshine and no sign of the approaching dusk. The two men paced up and down, looking anxiously towards Chuharkhana.

Finally they saw one figure emerge on the road. They came down the ramparts and hurried to meet the person only to find that it was Bhai Mardana. Where is Nanak? Asked Kalu. Kalu replied; “He is hesitant to face your anger and has hid himself under a tree back there”. Guru Nanak had hidden himself under a large van tree whose branches touched the ground making it look like a Tambu (tent). The three men went up to the tree to fetch Nanak. Nanak looked very sad and somewhat nervous. Before anyone could speak, Nanak told them that they had come back empty handed.



Kalu and Rai Bular listened in disbelief as Nanak went on to tell them of the encounter with the starving villagers and that he had distributed all the goods among them. "There is nothing left. I gave away all our purchases". Nanak went on to say; "Many of villagers were dying. We would have been guilty of their murder if we had not fed them." "What am I to do with this boy?" Kalu cried in frustration. He beat his breast and wept in sheer helplessness. The loss of a huge amount of money was bad enough, what was far worse was his son's failure. "I will be the laughing stock of the village," he said. "The father of a boy who is so stupid as to give away twenty silver Rupees. Oh! I will never be able to live with this humiliation." "Calm down, Kalu. It is not the end of the world." said Rai Bular. "That is what you always say Rai Sahib. How long can I remain calm and patient in the face of one debacle after another? Look what Nanak has done now. I have lost all my money in trusting him to go out and make a profit”. Rai Bular took Kalu aside and appealed to

him yet again. "Just this once, my friend. I promise you I will not ask for your indulgence again. Nanak is not a worldly child. It is too much to expect him to conduct himself in an ordinary way. I think we belittle him by supposing that he could be drawn into the sordid business of buying and selling. Besides, the damage has been done and no purpose will be served by chastening the boy." Kalu realized that Rai Bular was right; no purpose would be served by chastening Nanak simply because it would have no effect on him anyway. He would continue to go his own way, doing what was in his heart, oblivious to the praise or censure of the world. "And the twenty silver coins - have no worry on account of their loss. I will give you twenty more to make up this loss." Rai Bular assured Kalu. He looked at the Rai in disbelief as the Rai smiled and put his hand on Kalu's shoulder and said, "The true bargain of life is sharing one's earning with the needy and helping in whatever way we can" and with that the Rai took out twenty rupees and gave it to Kalu.

Rai Bular never seemed to tire of defending young Nanak and was prepared to go to any length to make up for his lapses. But Kalu's anger reared up again as he looked at Nanak. "He could at least admit he has made a mistake and ask to be forgiven," he raged. "I have made no mistake," Nanak said softly, turning to his father. "You wanted me to earn great profit and that I have. You have repeatedly emphasized that we must never turn away a hungry man, a sadhu, or a needy when he comes to our door for alms. You have often said that in the eyes of God it is an opportunity to earn great profit by giving food to one who is hungry or in need. If there is profit in feeding one human, imagine how great a profit I have earned you in the eyes of God by using your money to feed an entire village who had gone without food and water for days. In my heart I have made the most profitable investment that any human can make."

Rai Bular was impressed by Nanak's irrefutable logic and struggled to hide his smile. He knew that Nanak truly believed that he had not done anything wrong with the money but had done a 'Sacha Sauda' (True bargain) in the truest sense. But from the corner of his eye he could see that Kalu was still furious as they stood in tense silence. In a matter of minutes, the news spread all over Talwandi. People stopped in the street to stare at Nanak, and a few youngsters even passed whispered comments and snickered at their own humor that Nanak took all the money and purchased food, supplies, clothes and drinking water for

total strangers. Nanak then instead of going home went and sat under a the same tree outside Talwandi to reflect and reassure himself that what he had done was absolutely right and he need not feel guilty anymore.

At the place where the true bargain took place, Gurdwara Sacha Sauda Sahib is built (present day city of Farooqabad, Pakistan). The tradition of sharing food known as 'Langar' is carried out at every Gurdwara.

Meanwhile, the ladies in Bedi household were gripped by suspense and tension. Nanki and Tripta were longing to put their arms around the boy and tell him not to worry, that the loss of the money didn't matter and that they admired him for what he had done. But they were afraid of igniting Kalu's anger into a fresh outburst. When Nanak came home after his meditation under the tree, taking their cue from the head of the family, they greeted Nanak in total silence. Only his sister Nanki managed a surreptitious smile. Nanak seemed upset as he assumed that they too lacked understanding and when Tripta placed a Thali (plate) of food before him, he pushed it firmly aside. Tripta was about to coax him to eat when Kalu cut in brusquely, "There is no need to fuss over him. If he is not hungry, he need not eat. Go, Nanak, go to bed." Much later,

when the household was quiet, Nanki and Tripta brought Nanak some food. Once again he pushed it aside. "You have earned so much merit by feeding an entire village; will you deny us the little we would earn by feeding one hungry boy?" Tripta smiled and caressed his hair. Nanak felt the sadness lift from his heart.

Nanak then knew that his father's disappointment notwithstanding, he had done the right thing in feeding the poor village. He smiled at his mother and sister, and ate the food that they had brought him. His sister knew in her heart that her brother was meant for greater things, and that he was like no other ordinary boy? His father, helpless in the face of all this, began to wonder rather reluctantly if perhaps Nanaki and Rai Bular were right after all, that Nanak was unlike any other boy. Nanak was soon to prove them all right.

Guru Nanak is gripped by a mysterious illness.

In spite of the unstinting assurance and support of Rai Bular and Nanki, a strange mood gripped Nanak after the Sacha Sauda incident. He became more and more withdrawn and began keeping entirely to himself. Even his sister's words of affection and his mother's comforting touch elicited no smile from him. He would lie for hours on his Manji (rope cot), his face covered with a Chaddar (bed sheet), lost in his own thoughts. He ignored all efforts of others to reach out to him. He ate little and that too when his mother and sister threatened to go on a fast. Sometimes his mother would find him sitting all by himself, tears trickling down his cheeks in soundless weeping. He would go off on long solitary walks in the middle of the night. He stopped communicating with Bhai Mardana and even stopped visiting Mardana to participate in the singing of devotional songs. He no longer indulged in endless debates with the holy men camping in the nearby forest, or intellectual discussions with his Sufi friends passing through Talwandi. It was as if he had lost all interest in life. He grew frail and gaunt. The sleepless nights left their mark in the dark circles under his eyes. There was a feverish restlessness in all that he did and in the occasional monosyllable that he would to utter.

His condition deteriorated so much that Kalu forgot his anger and disappointment and was consumed by worry and anxiety. Nanak's strange affliction became a subject of concern for everyone in Talwandi. There were some who said that he had been acting strange from birth-

and everything he had done in his life was strange, so this behavior was to be expected. There were others who said that this was divine retribution-God's way of punishing him for the arrogance that he had displayed towards the wise and pious Pandit Hardayal at the aborted Janeu ceremony (stringing of the thread ceremony). Still others said that he was possessed by an evil spirit, and till this spirit was exorcised, neither Nanak nor the Bedi household would know any peace.

Tripta and Nanki, unable to find a rational explanation for Nanak's condition, began to subscribe to the theory of the evil spirit as well. They would have sent for an exorcist if Rai Bular had not warned them that such a course might do more harm than good. Nanak's lack of faith in miracles and supernatural phenomena like ghosts and spirits was well known, and an exorcist attempting to drive away a so-called spirit might have pushed him further into despondency. A cure through the services of an exorcist was thus abandoned. At last Rai Bular prevailed upon Nanak to let Haridas, the village physician, examine him for a physical ailment. Haridas was a renowned physician and well-liked by the inhabitants of Talwandi and the neighboring villages. Not only was his diagnosis remarkably accurate but his treatment was simple and uncomplicated. In addition, Haridas had an engaging bedside manner and was able to draw his patients out to share their worries and anxieties with him. As a result, his patients received both medical treatment and counselling from the worthy physician and they looked upon him as a friend and confidant. So it was with Nanak as well.

When Haridas felt Nanak’s pulse, before Haridas could say anything, Nanak remarked, "I am afflicted not with the pain of the body, but with the pain of the soul." Hardas had a number of sessions with Nanak and no one knew what transpired between them. All that Haridas said to the anxious friends and relatives was, "Do not worry about Nanak's health, he will soon be well. He is troubled by matters of the spirit but he will come to terms with them”. As Rai Bular had predicted when Nanak was just a child; “Nanak is no ordinary child. He is destined to be great and Talwandi will be proud to claim him as her son”. Rai Bular was right.

When Haridas, the physician asked Nanak what he himself thought the illness was, Nanak replied:

I first feel the pain of separation from God, then a pang of hunger for contemplation on Him. I also fear the pain which Death's powerful

myrmidons may inflict. I feel pain that my body shall perish by disease. O ignorant physician, give me no medicine. Such medicine as thou hast, my friend, removeth not - The pain I feel or the continued suffering of my body.

I forgot God and devoted myself to pleasure -Then this bodily illness befell me. The wicked heart is punished. Ignorant physician, give me no medicine. As sandal is useful when it exhaleth perfume, As man is useful as long as he hath breath in his body, So when the breath departeth, the body crumbleth away and becometh useless: No one taketh medicine after that. When man shall possess the Name of the Bright and Radiant One, His body shall become like gold and his soul be made pure;

All his pain and disease shall be dispelled, And he shall be saved, Nanak, by the true Name.

Haridas understood what Guru Nanak had said. He took leave of Mehta Kalu saying, *"Nanak has no physical ailment. He is immersed in the love of God. So stop worrying about your son. He does not need any medicine from a doctor."*

Gradually, the restlessness passed from Nanak's soul. He began to sleep and eat regularly; the flesh came back to his bones. He lost the feverish, wild-eyed look and his face now often lit up with a divine smile. Though still not gregarious, he was friendly and affable enough and spent more and more time interacting with others. He began to seek the company of Bhai Mardana and Sufi men again. He resumed his scholarly sessions with Sufi's and his practice of singing devotional songs with Mardana. In short, he was once again the Nanak that Talwandi had known before the strange illness had come upon him.

Everyone in the village heaved a sigh of relief and Nanki, who had stayed back in Talwandi to look after her brother, was at last able to rejoin her husband in Sultanpur. Life moved on placidly and things were quiet in the Bedi household. But Mehta Kalu's frustration at the apparent lack of direction and purpose in Nanak's life surfaced from time to time and found expression in regular conflicts with his son. Nanak was not unduly perturbed by his father's flashes of anger and continued to follow the routine he had set for himself. Tripta was grateful that her son's moodiness seemed to be a thing of the past. Though he continued to spend long hours in introspection and meditation, he was polite and affable with everyone he came into contact with.

GURU NANAK'S MARRIAGE (1487 AD)

When Nanak turned eighteen and half years of age and though his reputation of uncertain and erratic behavior did not mark him out as the most eligible of bachelors, the economic stability of the Bedi family and Mehta Kalu's proximity to Rai Bular had elicited a few discreet enquiries. Most boys of his age were already married but Nanak himself had shown no inclination towards matrimony and had ignored the hints that had been thrown his way. His mother Tripta too did not pursue any of the proposals for wanting to pressurize him. But the proposal brought by his sister Nanki could not be brushed aside as the girl was a distant relative of her husband, Jai Ram. Her name was Sulakhni and she was the daughter of Mul Chand, the Patwari of village **Pakhoke** near the town of **Batala**.

Nanak's sister knew Sulakhni well and had struck up a warm friendship with the young girl. She spoke of Sulakhni in glowing terms to her mother Tripta. "Not only is she extremely attractive but she is also polite, gentle, and soft-spoken. She is diligent in performing her chores and will make an excellent home-maker. Her quiet sensibility and pleasant disposition will keep the family well-knit and happy." Tripta laughed good-naturedly. "In your desire to get your friend as a sister-in-law you are lauding her to the skies." "But you haven't heard the best part, Mother," Nanki said, grinning from ear to ear. "Sulakhni knows of our Nanak. She has heard the story of the Sacha Sauda (the true bargain), when Nanak fed the villagers. And," Nanki paused dramatically, her eyes large and incredulous, "she says she would like a husband like him" Tripta was delighted. "How did she hear of this?" "I guess someone from my husband's family must have told her and she says she is so impressed by what Nanak did, she would be happy to spend her life with him."

The news gladdened Tripta's heart. She admitted to herself that the reason why she had not pursued the matter of Nanak's marriage was her fear that no girl would be able to cope with her son's unworldly ways and moody behavior. "The girl seems an ideal bride for your brother. But will he agree to marry her?" "Don't worry, Mother," Nanki said. "Have faith in me, I do have some influence over my brother and I am sure I can make him accept this proposal. I will even ask Rai Bular to encourage him as he listens to Rai Bular". Sure enough, with a little encouragement, Nanak accepted the proposal. Sulakhni's acceptance of

his extraordinary behavior and nature finally won him over. Nanki took Nanak's horoscope back with her and when the pundit in Pakhoke declared that Sulakhni and Nanak were eminently suitable for each other, there was much happiness on both sides.

Rai Bular was firmly convinced that marriage would bring about a great change in Nanak's attitude towards life. With the responsibility of a wife, and later of children, Nanak was bound to act in a more responsible and down-to-earth manner. If nothing else, he would at least be forced to find himself an occupation. Mehta Kalu could not share Rai Bular's optimism. His hopes had been dashed to the ground once too often and he was not prepared to set much store in the therapeutic value of marriage. But it was customary for young men of eighteen to get married and Kalu decided to comply with the established tradition. As the day of the wedding approached, Mehta Kalu too was swept along by the tide of infectious gaiety that flowed into the Bedi household. The marriage of a son was an occasion for great rejoicing, and in spite of his disappointment and frustration at his son, Kalu loved him dearly.

It would appear that, owing to the distance between Talwandi and Batala, which hindered frequent visits and negotiations, the marriage followed very soon after the betrothal. Nanak had refused to follow the marriage rituals dictated by the Brahmins of the day. He stated that any time would be an auspicious time for the wedding. There was no need to cast horoscopes as he was not superstitious. Nanak's sister was present at the wedding, but her husband could not obtain permission to attend. He sent word that he was employed by the Nawab and urgent matters had to be taken care of so he sent an apology that was perfectly understood.

The day the marriage of Guru Nanak was fixed to take place, all the people of Talwandi assembled together. When they were about to set forth for Sultanpur, where Nanak was staying with his sister, they gathered at Rai Bular's place to seek his blessing and wish him farewell; As Henry Court in his book History of the Sikhs, 1888, Translation of the 'Sikkhan de raj di Vikhia', in Chapter VI describes the events;

"And Kalu, going before the Rai, stood before him; "O Rai, may you be blessed" then the Rai said "What is it, Kalu?" and Kalu said "We feel

ourselves deeply indebted to you. The marriage day of your slave Nanak has been fixed and the marriage party are going to Pakhoke Jiandliawa to pay the money for the marriage preparations; will you please give us your blessing and permission to go." Then the Rai said; "Kalu, Do not again call Nanak my slave; if you do, I shall be very angry. Then Kalu said, "Sir, to be respectful is incumbent upon me." The Rai asked; What Kalu, are other forms of respect too few?" Kalu Said; "Well Sir, forgive me this fault; I forgot myself." Then the Rai said, "Go Kalu, God will forgive you; Go may your desire be fulfilled, and give my respect to Nanak."

In another history text the same incident is repeated in a slightly different manner;

"and Kalu, going before the Rai, stood before him; "O Rai, may you be blessed" then the Rai said "What is it, Kalu?" and Kalu said, "We feel ourselves deeply indebted to you. The marriage day of your slave Nanak has been fixed and the marriage party are going to Pakhoke Jiandliawa to pay the money for the marriage preparations; will you please give us your blessing and permission to go." Then the Rai said; "Kalu, Do not again call Nanak my slave; if you do, I shall be very angry." Then Kalu said, "O Rai! Do not raise doubts in my heart." Then the Rai said, "No. Kalu, that is not it; I meant something else; Nanak is nothing more than a holy man; take care not to quarrel, for perhaps he may say something harsh to you." Then Kalu said, "No Rai, he is the desire of my heart and my soul; and Rai, God has made you the master here, therefore, have kindness on us and give us your blessing and your permission to go." Then the Rai said, "Go Kalu! May God fulfil your desire; this is also my hope; but Kalu, it behooves me also to kiss the forehead of Nanak, do touch his feet with your hands for me, and make my apologies to Jai Ram; go, may God protect you." Then Kalu got into the cart, and, on the fifth day, arrived at Sultanpur. He arrived on Thursday, and entered the house of Parmanand, and began to utter his congratulations. Then Nanak received intimation that his father and mother had come; and that his paternal uncle, and paternal grandmother and grandfather, and maternal uncle had come, and also Bhai Mardana had arrived. Then Nanak, immediately on hearing it, got up and came running, and forthwith fell at the feet of Kalu. Kalu raised him and kissed his forehead; then Nanak said, "father, was the Rai well?" Then Kalu said, "Son, he remembered you most kindly; the Rai told me to kiss your forehead and

tough your feet but I had forgotten it." Kalu pressed him to his neck, and said, "Son, you have dignified our family; God knows what will happen hereafter; but in this world, you have dignified it."

On 23rd September 1487 AD, the wedding procession left for Batala and on 24th September 1487 AD Nanak was married to Sulakhni. Guru
The couple came back to Talwandi and within a matter of days it was as if Sulakhni had always been a member of the family. Tripta discovered, to her delight, that the girl was all that Nanki had said she was, and more. Always ready with a smile, she took on the responsibility of running the household and Tripta was happy to be relieved of the heavier chores which she now found difficult to perform. Sulakhni had even found a place in her father-in-law's heart and he said to his wife, "I know no one can take the place of our daughter Nanki in our home and in our lives, but with Sulakhni here, the void our daughter left does not seem so deep anymore."

Gurudwara Kandh Sahib, Batala

Gurdwara Kandh Sahib derives its name from Kachchi Kandh, i.e. mud wall, which, according to local tradition, stood on this site at the time of Guru Nanak's marriage. It is said that as the wedding party arrived and stopped a little distance short of Bhai Mul Chand's house, waiting for formal reception by the host. Guru Nanak sat down close to the wall. An old lady living nearby, pointing to the dilapidated state of the wall, told

him to move away from the spot because the crumbling wall may fall on him. Guru Nanak assured her that there was no cause for alarm for the wall would stay intact for a long time. The wall so consecrated by the Guru became an object of veneration for the devotees who also constructed a memorial platform near it. A symbolic mud wall, neatly plastered, 3 x 5 x 1.5 feet approximately, encased in glass, next to the Guru Granth Sahib at the ground floor, now represents the original wall.

Sulakhni won her mother-in-law's admiration through her unflinching devotion to her husband. A bond of mutual respect and deep friendship had grown between the young couple. The strength of this relationship was revealed in their quiet moments together, when Nanak shared his deepest thoughts and concerns with Sulakhni. She did not always understand his worries, especially when they pertained to his spiritual quest, but it gave him strength to know that she would always support him, no matter what course his life took.

One evening, Guru Nanak returned home in a rather subdued mood. He answered every question in monosyllables and after having pecked desultorily at his food, he went to his room. Tripta, his mother restrained Sulakhni from finishing the chores. "Go to him, he needs you," she said, Nanak smiled at her as she stole in quietly. "Come and sit by me," Nanak said. They sat together in silence for a long time, their souls in communion. Sulakhni reached out to smooth a furrow on his brow but he took her hand and held it close to his heart. "I know that there is only one thing that bothers you," she said eventually. "You worry whether the path you seek will ever be revealed to you."

Nanak touched Sulakhni's hand gently to his lips and then looked into her eyes and smiled. "I have spent much time in study and discussion and struggled to find a path which will lead me out of the pain and sorrow of our times-a path which others too could follow to achieve salvation, but sometimes the light appears dim and I despair of the path ever being revealed to me." "I do not know much about these matters-but it would seem to me that you are walking this path already. Your Sacha Sauda could only have been performed by a divine soul." Nanak chuckled at her trusting innocence. "In your simplicity you regard anything even slightly out of the ordinary as being marked by divinity. Anyone would have done as much in similar circumstances." They were quiet again and Sulakhni snuggled close to Nanak. "Do not despair.

Haven't you often said that we must trust in God and abide by his will? If you are struggling to find the right path, it is because God has so desired. If the path is revealed to you, it will be because God desires to reveal it to you-if not, then that too is God's wish. You must bow to His will and accept it with equanimity." Nanak held her close and with the warmth of her nearness, the worry and despair flowed away and he was again at peace with himself.

Nanak continued to follow his own course in life and there was no sign that he was likely to get involved in any productive activity as a result of his marriage. But Mehta Kalu, for once, refused to be despondent on that score. They had gained a daughter and soon there would be little children running around in the house. Nanak would live the life that destiny had ordained for him and though it was not a life that he would have wished for his son, he accepted it as the will of God.

EMPLOYMENT WITH DAULAT KHAN LODHI

Bahlul Lodhi died in 1489 AD. His second son succeeded him after his death on 17 July 1489 and took up the title Sikandar Shah Lodhi and ruler of the Delhi Sultanate. Daulat Khan Lodhi had established a peaceful relationship with his allied Rajput landlords and even married the sister of Rai Bular Bhatti, the largest and most powerful of the Rajput's in the Rechna Doab. Jai Ram, Bibi Nanki's husband was employed as an official in the service of Daulat Khan Lodhi, the Governor of Lahore. Sikandar Lodhi preferred the continuity of peace in his Lahore territory and welcomed the loyalty of Daulat Khan with open arms.

As Nanak grew up he did not feel at all interested in the worldly affairs. His father had thought that after Nanak's marriage, Nanak may change his attitude and pay more attention to earning a livelihood with less emphasis on meditation. As a father, Kalu became more and more worried and concerned. Jai Ram, during his yearly visits to Talwandi at the close of the spring harvest, had ample opportunities of cultivating Nanak s acquaintance, and appreciated his good qualities. Rai Bular by now had become a staunch advocate of Nanak and so was his sister deeply devoted to her younger brother. Bibi Nanki noticed her father's impatience at her brother's indifference towards worldly activities. Rai Bular and Jai Ram had already raised the concern that Nanak was a saint ill-treated by his father.

Taka (Tanka, Rupee, Coin) of Daulat Khan Lodhi found near Sultanpur

دولت خان لودی

While they were still contemplating what to do an incident happened that left no doubt that Nanak must get an occupation because he was wasting his life in saintly pursuits. Nanak had become friends with a fakir who was visiting Talwandi. Nanak told him, as he did to the other fakirs, that his name was Nanak Nirankari; and a friendly intimacy sprang up between the two. The fakir was probably a con-artist and swindler, and coveted a brass drinking vessel that Nanak carried and a gold ring which Nanak wore. After befriending Nanak, the fakir asked Nanak that he gifted the vessel and the ring. Nanak graciously acceded to the request, to the further sorrow and indignation of his parents. After this Bibi Nanki, Rai Bular and Jai Ram put their heads together and decided to get Nanak occupation in Sultanpur with Daulat Khan Lodhi if their father Kalu gave his consent - hoping Nanak would go with her to Sultanpur. Kalu did not hesitate and allowed his son to proceed to Sultanpur to join Jai Ram and Nanki if he got employed there.

Earlier, Rai Bular had promised Guru Nanak that if he learned Persian, in which all state documents and accounts were then written, he would appoint him village accountant in succession to his father. Even though Persian was never the tongue of Hindus, and was despised by them as the language of foreigners and conquerors, Nanak had learned it well and was very conversant. Since Nanak could read and write in Persian, Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi obliged Rai Bular immediately. When Nanak was told of his employment in Sultanpur as in charge of the provision stores of Daulat Khan Lodhi, he agreed and Nanak departed for Sultanpur in 1488 AD. He was 20 years old.

Nanak moved to Sultanpur and settled with Nanki and her husband Jai Ram. Soon he sent for his wife who joined him and they lived a regular

family life for some time. At Sultanpur, Nanak worked diligently all the time at the provision stores, where he lavishly distributed goods among the poor and the needy.

After a few months, Bhai Mardana joined Nanak from Talwandi along with some other friends. Guru Nanak introduced them to Daulat Khan, who provided them suitable jobs in his administration. Bhai Mardana, who in addition to being Nanak's friend had become Nanak's devoted servant by now. All the 'Boys from Talwandi' got together every evening and performed Shabad-Kirtan (singing divine hymns) for the Sultan as well as the people of Sultanpur. Nanak was frequently praised by the Sultan Governor as he applied his brilliance to his duties, and so discharged them that everybody was gratified and congratulated him. Of the salary and provisions that Nanak received from the Governor, he would keep only a small portion for himself for his maintenance and give the rest away to the poor and needy.

One day while at work, he was selling provisions at the store and weighing the provisions when something strange happened. He was counting each weighing as 'one, two, three... ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen'. When he reached the number thirteen (13)- 'Tera' (in Punjabi language Tera means number 13, and Tera also means 'Yours'), he went into meditation. In meditation, Nanak went on weighing and kept repeating, "Tera, tera, tera.. (which means 'I am Yours, O Lord')" and kept filling the customer's bag.

The customers were happy to receive the extra provisions and did not know how to carry so much ration. They could not understand the bounties of the Lord. Ultimately the situation reached Nawab Daulat Khan when a charge was levied against the Guru Nanak that he was recklessly giving away grain. The Nawab ordered an inquiry which was conducted very carefully. The Guru's detractors were surprised when the stores were found completely full. In fact, the accounts showed an extra surplus in favour of Guru Nanak.

At Sultanpur, Guru Nanak lived with his wife in his sister's house. The couple had two sons, Sri Chand (8th September 1494 AD and Lakhmi Chand (12th February 1497 AD). Bhai Mardana was constantly at his side. When Guru Nanak gave utterance to songs in the worship of God, Mardana, having set those songs to music, used to play them on the

Rabab, and sing them in the open. Seeing the new customs and strange habits of the two, all the neighboring people began to call them 'Wanderers' and 'Fakirs'. When Mardana, who was sensitive at heart, heard himself being called a wanderer by his brethren, he became sorrowful; on which Nanak said: *"Mardana, do not thou become wavering; this is the custom of the world that those, who leave their ways, and follow the road of God, them they call mad and wanderers; but there is nothing to fear, for we have no regard for them, and have sold ourselves in the name of God, who is Lord of all."*

The Divine Call

At Sultanpur, Nanak used to take his early morning bath daily in the river Bein that flowed nearby (Kali Bein is a rivulet in Punjab, India that flows into the confluence of the rivers Beas and Satluj). He would sit in deep meditation on its bank under a Ber Tree (Zizyphus jujube or Punjab Wild Berry Tree) to meditate, after which he started his day's work. He meditated under this tree daily for several years.

One day, when Guru Nanak was about 30 years old, he went to bathe and meditate as usual. But this time, again something happened which was very strange and unusual. Some people, who had observed Nanak entering the water did not see him come out of the river. His clothes were still on the river bank and people became very concerned. In the Janam Sakhis, this incident is described as a 'direct communion with the Divine'. As the Janam Sakhis narrate the details, "*Guru Nanak one morning disappeared into the stream and was not seen or be traced anywhere for two days. Everyone presumed that he had been drowned. No one could establish Nanak's whereabouts; most thought that he had been carried away by a strong current and was probably dead."*

Nanak's friend Mardana did not lose hope and started a twenty four hour vigil as he knew of Nanak's mysterious ways as well as had complete faith that Nanak was somehow alive. Then miraculously at the end of the third day, Nanak reappeared at a spot 2 km upstream, (that spot in now known as Sant Ghat). Upon emerging out of the stream, the first words Nanak uttered were: `There is no Hindu and there is no Muslim' on his lips, which he repeated over and over again. Mardana was overjoyed with tears and hugged Nanak and soon other curious people gathered around to ask Nanak questions. Nanak just pointed his finger to the skies and remained silent. This did not stop the crowd

getting larger and the curiosity and questions getting more persistent. At last Nanak spoke out and said: “I have received a call from the Timeless Being. God has favored me with a task to go and spread His message to all people far and near. ‘THERE IS NO HINDU, THERE IS NO MUSLIM’. God does not see any difference between a Hindu and a Muslim. Nor does He belong to only Hindus or Muslims. He considers all people alike and equal. This is true, and this is His message.” Thereafter he started the work, for which he felt, God had commissioned him. His first message to all was to promote equality. This meant that all humans should be equal and they must shun class, color and creed, religious, social and other distinctions. That was what he meant by his oft-repeated catch-phrase 'There is no Hindu and no Muslim'. Nanak’s sermons soon became the talk of Sultanpur.

After one of his sermons, the local Qazi complained about him to the governor Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi, and the Nawab summoned Nanak to explain himself. Before the explanation hearing and the consequent judgment, Nanak went to the mosque where the Qazi led the prayer. The governor was also in the prayer hall. Nanak stood in a corner silently. As soon as the prayer finished, Nanak was seen cheerful and smiling. The Qazi approached him looking rather angry and irritated by his behavior. But before the Qazi could utter a word, Nanak spoke and said out loud so everyone could hear him;

“We are here in the house of the God. He witnesses everything and knows everything. Both the Qazi and the Governor’s minds were wandering away during the prayer. One was thinking of newborn filly, and the other about his business of buying horses in Kabul. Both are not good Muslims.”

Of course what Nanak had said about the lack of concentration by the two men in their prayer was true. Everyone who heard Nanak say these words was amazed. The next day Daulat Khan Lodhi sent his men to bring Guru Nanak to his court. When he reached the court of the Nawab, the Qazi was there as well. The Qazi asked Nanak, “What do you have to say for yourself about your comments in the mosque yesterday? How can you say that there exists no Musalman when you can see us with your own eyes here as well as in the mosque?” Guru Nanak replied, “All Muslims and Hindus call themselves true Musalmans and true Hindus, but in all honesty, there is no true Musalman and there is

no true Hindu. What I said in the mosque yesterday is true. All Hindus and Musalmans are children of the same God and they are all brothers. They should all love each other but they are not doing so. It is just that they have forgotten their true religions. By this act they are displeasing GOD."

The Nawab was amazed to hear this answer and said, "God speaks on the lips of Nanak." Even the Qazi was now convinced that Nanak was indeed a gifted person since the Qazi was a learned man and knew that

Nanak was not the first person to reject religion as an institution for teaching and promoting intolerance. Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi, a Muslim Persian poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic in the 13th-century in Turkey had written: "I'm not from the East or the West. I'm not Christian or Jew or Muslim. I'm not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi or Zen. I don't belong to any established religion or any cultural system. I'm neither body nor soul, for I belong to the Soul of my beloved God." And with this the Nawab gave Nanak the permission, facilities and supplies for Nanak and to go about on his divine journey. Guru Nanak was now ready to embark on his long journeys.

Gurdwara Ber Ji Sahib, Sultanpur Lodhi

Gurdwara Ber Sahib is the main shrine at Sultanpur. It is situated on the bank of river Kali Bein, half a kilometer west of the old town. It is built adjacent to an old 'Ber Tree' (Indian Berry Tree) under which Guru Nanak used to meditate. The present building of the Gurdwara was built by Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala. The foundation stone was laid by Bhai Arjan Singh of Bagarian on 25th Feb. 1937, and upon completion the Gurdwara was dedicated by Lt. Gen. Maharaja Yadavinder Singh of Patiala on 26th January 1941.

Guru Nanak Begins his Sacred Journeys

After Daulat Khan Lodhi granted permission to Nanak to pursue his dreams, Nanak resigned from the job as a storekeeper in 1499 AD and made plans to embark on his mission with the message of truth, love and honest living. Nanak's message was brief and simple to understand. God is One Supreme Being – the same God and creator of all life. The universal God of Muslims, Christians, Jews, Jains, Hindus, Buddhists and all people of other beliefs. He defined Him as the only one Creator, Who pervades the entire creation. Having an unparalleled existence He never entertains fear nor enmity against any one. His Being is not measured by time. God is the reason there is something rather than nothing. God is behind human consciousness. But the most characteristic thing of that god is that we know He was never born and is self-radiant.

All human beings were one. The same Supreme Soul pervades all humans. All humans have similar bodies and same temperaments. Human nature was the same everywhere and at all times. All humans feel pain, love, suffering, joy and every emotion that exists. Hence all differences of caste creed, color, size, profession, wealth, status and nationality were meaningless. In his eyes the so called lowest of the low were, as good as, rather better in many way than the self-centered highest of the high. In his teachings Guru Nanak attached great importance to the development of one's inner self—the soul within—the only criterion for that being the measure of truth and love inculcated in the soul so much so, that the same should radiate from within and diffuse all around.

At first Nanak went on short trips to different towns and villages around Sultanpur and when he was confident that his wife and children would be looked after by his sister Nanaki, he decided to venture on longer journeys.

To spread the message of humanity, Guru Nanak covered a large geographical tapestry. Today this area comprises of several nations: Pakistan, India, Nepal, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. To break barriers across faiths by engaging in spiritual dialogues, Guru Nanak visited more than 150 Islamic, Sufi and Hindu sites to seek and impart spiritual wisdom.

Guru Nanak rejected the existing three Semitic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) and three Indian religions of his time (Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism) and he was not about to start a yet another religion to add to them. He believed religions divide humanity. Guru Nanak wanted to unite humanity. As a 'Uniter of Humanity', he devoted his entire life to make mankind realize that humanity is One. Guru Nanak's rejection of organized religions was very subtle. What he preached to the Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews and Yogis was the daily conduct that will make them better, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews and Yogi's etc.

Just like Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (1207-1273), a 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic, Guru Nanak became a 'Uniter of Humanity'. Rumi, who inherited and expanded a center for Sufism in Konya in Turkey also had rejected religions as an institution. Rumi wrote: "I'm not from the East or the West. I'm not Christian or Jew or Muslim. I'm not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi or Zen. I don't belong to any established religion or any cultural system. I'm neither body nor soul, for I belong to the Soul of my beloved."

In his preaching Guru Nanak suggested practical ways of countering selfishness, ignorance and all that is evil. The spiritual and social welfare of the common people was his prime concern. He wanted them to act with reason and not follow others blindly. According to Guru Nanak the political and cultural domination of the people by the ruling and priestly classes was chiefly responsible for their degeneration and degradation. He gave these demoralized people a new consciousness, which was based on the principle of the 'unity' and 'fatherhood' of God and the equality and kinship of humankind. Guru Nanak's teachings were a direct challenge to the authority of the priestly class and the inhumanity of the ruling tyrants. There were times when he was ridiculed, stoned and even imprisoned, however, Guru Nanak was never afraid to raise his clear voice against cruelty, injustice and falsehood.

The people, to whom Guru Nanak talked and preached found something special and different in his message from what they already knew; and those who followed him or his teachings closely, came to be known as Sikhs, meaning learners or followers. Both Hindus and Muslims were among Guru Nanak's followers. He lived amongst them, shared their

joys and sorrows and taught them the way of honest and truthful living. His main message was:

"Truth is high. But higher still is truthful living. "

Guru Nanak stressed that one should not try to escape from worldly family responsibilities but embrace them.
"Not the ascetic way,
But a life of truth and love
Amid the world's temptations
Is the secret of spiritual life"?

He also advised to desist from bigotry and respect the saints of every faith'.
"Put away thy pride.
The essence of religion is humility,
Service, sympathy.
Not the yogi's garb and ashes,
Not the shaven head,
Not long prayers'
Not recitations and torturing's....."

Whosoever came in contact with Guru Nanak and on whomsoever his benign look fell, experienced some celestial light and aura emanating from Nanak – an aura of love, trust, acceptance and confidence, and this is why Nanak began to be addressed by all as `Guru' Nanak.

Guru Nanak's Four Great Journeys (Udasis)

After Nanak had spent some time spreading the Divine Message amongst the people in the Kartarpur he planned to venture further out with his mission first all over India. Later they went abroad to the Middle East, Tibet and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). During his travels, he held discussions with religious leaders: Hindus—(Brahmans, Sidhs and Jogis), Muslims—(Sufis, Mullahs and Qazis), Jains and Buddhists and others he could learn from. This adventurous spirit was equally complemented with his inquisitiveness and desire to visit some important centers of religious worship and learning, as well as meeting people and sharing their joys and sufferings. For nearly fifteen years Nanak was on the move criss crossing the whole of Indian subcontinent, east, west, north and south. These long tours, purposeful wanderings or journeys were popularly known as Udasis. Four Udasis were under taken as four

different itineraries; each starting on foot from his hometown, Talwandi in the Punjab, and taking some years to complete. During each journey, Nanak usually wore a strange 'motley' dress, which attracted people's attention and curiosity. Although there are many gaps in the travels of Guru Nanak, Fauja Singh and Kirpal Singh, Sikh historians, have collated the information from various sources to confirm these four major travels of Guru Nanak. Various other historians as well as Janamsakhi's generally also confirm these four journeys with minor variations in dates and companions.

FIRST JOURNEY (First Udasi)

Guru Nanak's 1st journey (Udasi) started in circa 1500 AD. In his first journey, Guru Nanak covered east of India and returned home after spending about six years. He started from Sultanpur in 1500 and went to his village Talwandi first to meet and inform Rai Bular and his parents about his long journey.

Guru Nanak with travelling companions, Bhai Mardana & Bhai Bala

In his book 'The Sikh Religion', Max Arthur MacAuliffe describes Nanak's departure from Talwandi as follows; *"The other members of Nanak s family also unanimously approved of his decision. Nanak's wife alone, on seeing him make preparations for his journey, began to weep, and said, My life, even here thou hast not loved me; when thou goest to a foreign country, how shalt thou return? He answered, simple woman, what have*

I been doing here? Upon this she again entreated him, When thou satest down at home, I possessed in my estimation the sovereignty of the whole earth; now this world is of no avail to me. Upon this he grew compassionate, and said, Be not anxious; thy sovereignty shall ever abide. She replied, My life, I will not remain behind; take me with thee. Then Nanak said, I am now going away. If I can earn my living, I will send for thee. Obey my order. She then remained silent. When Nanak asked Rai Bular's permission to depart, the Rai gave him a banquet. The Rai then requested him to give him any order he pleased, that is, to state what favor he might grant him. Nanak replied; "I give thee just one order if thou wilt comply with. When thine own might availeth not, clasp thy hands and worship God".

'Guru Nanak leaving for his first Udasi from Talwandi'. This painting was discovered in the late 20th century. Seen with Guru Nanak is his Wife, Children, Sister, Father, Uncle and companion Bhai Mardana.

Nanak and Bhai Mardana packed a minimal of supplies including their Rabab and said goodbye to their family and friends. Donning the garb of a Fakir and accompanied by his companion Mardana, Guru Nanak left Talwandi and set on his initial short missionary tours to surrounding towns of Talwandi. These short tours prepared him for longer journeys. In those days there were no paved roads or direction signs. Knowing where to go and which route to take was an art learned only through travel and interfacing and learning from other travelers.

In one of his first travels, he halted at a small town called Emenabad (now known as Saidpur), midway between Talwandi and Sialkot. They stayed at the house of Lalu, a carpenter from Talwandi who was living in Emenabad. While in Emenabad, they had an encounter with a local rich landlord named Malik Bhago, who was also the chief of the town. When Malik Bhago learned of a famous Saint's arrival in town, he offered Guru Nanak a luxurious place to stay and the choicest of dishes in order to impress the Saint. To his disappointment, Guru Nanak turned down the offer. Malik Bhago was surprised and asked as to why Nanak was staying and having his meals with a low-caste carpenter and had refused Malik Bhago's generous hospitality. Guru Nanak replied; *"your food is ill-begotten and smacks of the blood, sucked of the poor, while milk oozes out of the honestly earned bread of Lalu. Humble but honest laborers are more welcome at my God's court than the high caste idle rich enjoying other's earnings"*. This incident is described in Guru Nanak's poem is as follows;

"Among the low let my caste be the meanest,
of the lowly, let me the lowliest be.
O Nanak! Let such be the men I know,
With such men let me keep company.
Why should I try to emulate the great?
Where the fallen have protected been
Is your grade and your goodness seen."

From **Saidpur** (modern **Emenabad**, Pakistan) he went to **Pasrur** (Pakistan) and then to **Sialkot** (Pakistan). Guru Nanak was of the age of 31 years old when he left on this trip. He came back to Saidpur on the same route to rest where he stayed for a while with is friend Kalu the carpenter again. During his stay in Saidpur and Pasrur area is when he first visited Kartarpur, a quiet village on the Banks of River Ravi. Kartarpur was approx. 40 miles from Saidpur and 22 miles from Pasrur. He would later, at the age of 57, make Kartarpur as his permanent home and move his family there.

Guru Nanak and Jogis at Achal Batala

About 25 miles from Kartarpur, there was a place called Achal Batala where on the occasion of Shivratri festival, hundreds of Jogis used to come to take part in the festival. Guru Nanak also went to Achal Batala to teach people. Thousands of people came from far and near to see and hear him. There were three camps - one of the Jogis, another of the

Guru and the third one of a party of musicians. More and more people gathered around the Guru Nanak's camp than that of the Jogis. This made the Jogis very angry and jealous and they were determined to humble the Guru Nanak.
Whatever money the musicians living in the third camp were getting from the audience was being saved by them in a bowl. Somehow the Jogis stole their bowl full of money and hid it someplace thinking that the musicians would go to Guru Nanak for help and if the Guru was unable to locate the bowl, he would be humbled.

Knowing about the greatness of Guru Nanak, the musicians went to the Guru for help to find their bowl of money. Guru Nanak within no time told them about the mischief of the Jogis and recovered their bowl from the hiding place. Thus the Jogis suffered a tremendous moral defeat.

The next verbal assault on Guru Nanak from the Jogis came through a discussion. As a practice, Guru Nanak after his travels used to put aside his pilgrim's apparel and change into an ordinary dress of a family man. A Jogi by the name of Bhagarnath said, "O Guru, you are a holy man but you are wearing the garb of a family person. Why does a holy man lead a family life?" The Jogi sarcastically further went on to say; "When the milk becomes sour, no butter is produced by churning it, why have you cast away your hermit's dress and donned ordinary clothes?"

Guru Nanak calmly looked at the Jogi and replied; "O' Bhangarnath, your mother was an unskilled woman. She knew not how to wash the churn, and so spoilt the butter in producing thee. Thou hast become an anchoret after abandoning thy family life, and yet thou goest to beg to the houses of family men."

Upon this reply the Jogis were enraged and they started to harass the Guru. One Jogi took out a Cobra snake to frighten the Guru, the other put on a mask of a Wolf and other started howling and throwing water and fire at Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak sat through this drama calmly unperturbed and unafraid. When the Jogis were tired and beaten badly, Jogi Bhangarnath asked the Guru that he exhibited amazing calm and complimented Guru Nanak.
(Note: This story of Guru Nanak with the Jogis could also well be after he had retired to Kartarpur in 1527 since he made several short visits to areas around Kartarpur even after his retirement. But in any case, he

had many interactions with Jogis in this area as well as Jogis in the Hills of Himalayas – north of India.)

Guru Nanak with Guru Gorakhnath, Mardana and Bala and eleven yogis, (Painted in Amritsar or Lahore, ca. 1875 AD.)
Guru Nanak sitting with Mardana (with rabab), Bala (with peacock feathers) and twelve yogis and two more yogis flying in the air. The picture illustrates the contest involving a lost 'lota' (water-pot) and magical powers which the Janam-sakhis set in Achal Batala. To the left of Guru Nanak sits Guru Gorakhnath, to the extreme left is labelled Mangal Dass, and behind Nanak sits Machhendranath and Bhagarnath.

Guru Nanak and the Two Villages

Guru Nanak travelled to various villages from Saidpur to spread the message of love, compassion and humanity and to profess the purpose of human life as he saw it on Earth. Nanak had gained immense popularity and was highly respected by all religions and sects of society. The news of his visit to any village would reach much before his arrival, and people used to prepare their villages in advance to welcome him.

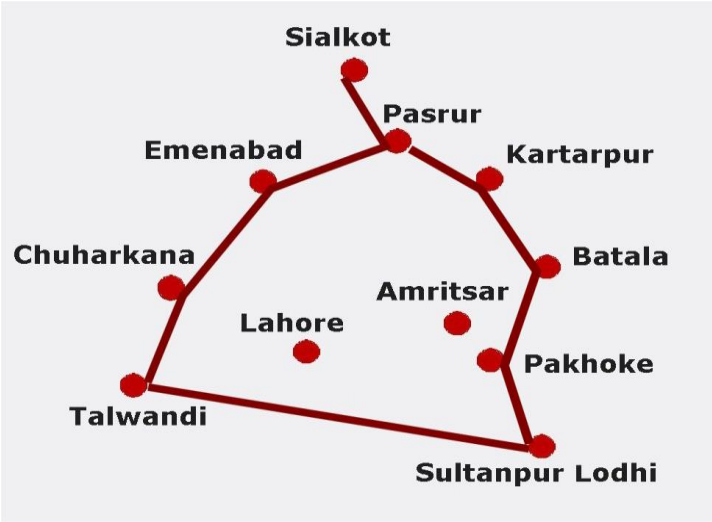
On one of his journeys, Nanak along with his companion and by this time also his disciple Bhai Mardana came across village. The natives of this village were cold, haughty, and disdainful. The village was headed by a cruel landlord and a hypocrite priest who did not like any holy men visiting them. However, they let Nanak into their village reluctantly, but

showed their arrogance and made Nanak feel unwelcomed. Guru Nanak spent some time with them in an attempt to teach them the truth, but realized that the natives were not willing to listen to him at all so he decided to leave. Keeping the tradition of blessing the people wherever he went, upon leaving this village, Nanak raised his hand and said, "Vasde raho (May you stay and prosper here)."

Mardana was astonished at Nanak's blessings after having received an extremely cold treatment from the villagers and he had no clue as to why Nanak wished that they 'stay there and prosper'.

Further on their journey they arrived at another village. The natives in this village were simple, loving, kind, and gracious in their behavior. Every day, the villagers would get together and listen to Nanak's lessons of wisdom and become keenly involved. They would ask Nanak questions and learned from him how to transform their lives to overcome their sufferings and embrace excellence. Nanak spent a few days with them. When he realized, his purpose had been served, he bid farewell to the village. While leaving, in his customary style, Nanak raised his hand to bless the villagers, and said, "Ujad Jao (or Ujhar Jao, which means 'May you get displaced – or scattered')."

Hearing Nanak's benediction, Mardana was completely baffled. Unable to control his curiosity; he asked, "O Nanak, you blessed those who ill-treated us to 'stay and prosper', and these people who have been so nice to us, you are blessing them to get displaced and scatter. Why? I cannot understand the point." Nanak gave a discerning reply, "The natives of the previous village are conceited. Their towering ego has closed their minds to new insights, so there isn't even a chance for transformation. They do not possess good values and morals. It is better that they stay within their village, so that their egoism doesn't affect others. Contrarily, people of this village are good and they carry great values. If they are displaced, they will go to other places. Wherever they will go, they will enrich others with their high values and character. They will bring positivity among people. They have the potential to change the society for betterment." Mardana, bemused at Nanak's enlightened vision, fell on his feet and thanked God for he had the most wonderful teacher one could ever have.



RETURN TO TALWANDI

When Nanak showed an inclination to remain in Saidpur (Emenabad) for a few months, Bhai Mardana asked permission from Guru Nanak to visit Talwandi for some time to see his family. At Talwandi Mardana met with Rai Bular, Mehta Kalu and his own family. At first, on hearing of Nanak's state of a 'Fakir' from Mardana, Kalu was a bit upset. But when Mardana gave them further details of Nanak's lifestyle, they became extremely distressed, and were greatly enraged at Mardana. Mardana defended Nanak and explained to Kalu, "Kalu, Nanak has not become a fakir, he is but a banker of bankers, and a king of kings"; but Kalu, on hearing his words, heaved many deep sighs of regret. In the meanwhile, Rai Bular, upon hearing that Mardana had come from Nanak, summoned Mardana and asked about Nanak's state. When Mardana repeated what he had told Kalu, Rai Bular said "what lie have you told us - Tau Gal Da Har Ban Giya Ae" which means "the lie you are telling is like empty weight of a necklace around the neck". When a person bothers and annoys others, the common expression used at that time was "You have become a weight like the necklace around my neck."

On his return to Emenabad from Talwandi, while seated one day, Bhai Mardana, clasped his hands together and petitioned to Guru Nanak "Guru ji, Rai Bular is very anxious to obtain a sight of you, and if you will go to Talwandi, then his desire will be fulfilled". Nanak agreed and the following day departed for Talwandi with Mardana at his side. When he reached Talwandi, Nanak went straight to the water well where he used

to play as a child and stopped there. Nanak's household, having heard of his arrival, came, and, immediately on seeing his fakir-like state began to say, "Nanak! What disguise is this thou hast assumed? Behold we, thy father and mother, uncle and other relations, seeing thee, are greatly distressed; does no pity arise in thee?" Hearing this speech, Nanak sang this beautiful composition:

Call patient endurance my mother, and contentment my father;
Call truth my uncle, for with these my heart has conquered its passions;
Listen Lalu, to these good qualities, but, as all people are bound in chains, (Note: Nanak's uncle was also named Lalu')
How can they tell what are good qualities?
Affection for God is my brother, and love of the True God is my son;
Patience has become my daughter, and in such I am absorbed.
Forbearance is my companion, and prudence is my disciple;
Call these my family, who always remain with me;
The one Supreme Being is my Lord, and He it is who created me;
You Nanak left Him and became attached to someone else, he would, be put to pain.

Hearing this, they all were mesmerized and hugged and kissed him. Then they brought him to the Rai Bular, and the Rai was greatly pleased to see him. The Rai entreated him nicely, "O Nanak! Do thou remain here, I will give thee some land too. You need someone to look after you and a means of income even when I am gone from this world." Rai Bular, then ordered the transfer of 20,000 acres of land, amounting to half his Talwandi estate as a gift to Guru Nanak. Up until that time, Rai Bular did not have any male heirs of his own. In those days, the custom was that all land was inherited by males in the household. Unfortunately all male infants born to Rai Bular would mysteriously die upon birth or shortly thereafter. Guru Nanak was thus as dear to him as his own son and Rai Bular bestowed all his love to Nanak from Nanak's very childhood. This enormous gift gesture filled Nanak's heart with so much respect for Rai Bular that he uttered the words "O Rai Ji, Rab Tera Bhalla Kare" – which means 'may God bless you and vouch over you'.

Rai Bular's descendants believe that it was the prayer from deep within Guru Nanak's heart that the following year and the year that followed, Rai Bular was blessed with not just one son but became a proud father of two sons. And it is due to Guru Nanak's blessing that to this day Rai

Bular's many descendants are thriving in Talwandi (Nankana Sahib).

Both Nanak and Bhai Mardana by now were accustomed to travel and became very restless in Talwandi after a few weeks and asked Rai Bular for permission to leave. Nanak's household also exhorted him greatly, but Nanak would not listen to what anyone said, and after a short time, with permission from Rai Bular and his parents, made preparations to return to his travels. Nanak's uncle, Lalu, said to him, "If thou art determined to wander about over the country, then do thou take some money, and traffic in horses; but it is not becoming for one like thee, to wander about like a fakir." Nanak, then, uttering this couplet, gave his reply:
"I will listen to the Sastras, make them my merchandise, and, take about (for sale) the horses of truth;
I will make good works my cash, and will not delay this till tomorrow:
I will go to God's country, for, there, I shall obtain an abode of joy."

Note: The 20,000 acres of fertile land that Rai Bular gifted to Nanak still exists in Nankana and is managed by the Govt. Trust. After Guru Nanak achieved eminence, Nankana Sahib became a famous town the world over as the birth place of Guru Nanak. It is now a part of the district of Nankana Sahib in the province of Punjab in Pakistan and is about fifty miles from Lahore. Predominantly Muslim, it however boasts of nine Sikh Gurdwaras. Though it is home to only a few permanent Sikh families, thousands visit during festivals, especially during Baisakhi, The Sikh Solar New Year Day and Guru Nanak Jayanti (Also known as 'Gurupurab', the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak).

Guru Nanak was now a seasoned traveler and Bhai Mardana his experienced and trusted companion. Both travelled on foot and had developed the skills and stamina to attempt further long journeys.

Sajjan the Thug and Assassin at Tulamba

From Talwandi they travelled south to a place called **Tulamba** (modern day Makhdumpur, Dist. Multan). This was a small town situated on the eastern edge of the Ravi River, between the cities of modern day Kot Abdul Hakeem and Mian Channu near Multan in Punjab province. (The modern Lahore to Nankana to Multan Motorway (M3) has been constructed on approx. this same route). When Guru Nanak and Bhai Mardana arrived at **Tulamba**, they saw a grand and upscale rest house

(inn) that appeared fit for a Sultan on the roadside. Its owner was Sheikh Sajjan whose was just called by the name 'Sajjan' which in Punjabi language means 'a friend'. Sajjan wore a white long garment to appear pious and religious to others. He had a reputation of being good to both Hindus and Muslim who stayed in his inn. He had provided facilities for Hindus, Muslims and people of faiths to pray in the mosque or the temple that he had built within.

Sajjan appearance was however deceptive. In reality, Sajjan was a 'Thug' and an assassin and his a saintly garb was just a cover. He had become extremely wealthy by deceiving selected rich guests and eventually robbing and killing them. His secret was disposing their bodies in a deep water well hidden inside his premises. His workers took care of his vast estate which increasingly became larger from his cunning wealth creation scam.

Seeing Guru Nanak, Sajjan thought to himself that Nanak must be a wealthy man and he made up his mind to rob and kill Guru Nanak and Mardana and steal their money. In preparation, he began serving the two generously and with great care. Guru Nanak sensed something fishy and became alert to what was on Sajjan's mind. Sadly it was not anything good. After serving them their meal, Sajjan said to Guru Nanak; "O holy man, come and sleep in comfort inside. It is night and getting quite late". Guru Nanak replied "Sajjan, we shall first sing a hymn in praise of the Lord, then welcome sleep to dream about the kingdom of God."

Guru Nanak began reciting the hymn and Mardana played the Rabab. The hymn, as incorporated in the Granth, offered some wonderful insights to Sajjan's intentions, which Sajjan immediately understood. It began with these lines:

"Bright sparkles the bronze
But when rubbed blackness comes from it,
The entire firmament is Thy salver, o Lord,
and the sun and the moon are the lamps thereon,
innumerable twinkling stars are the pearls
and rubies set in Thy salver."

"The poetry explained that shiny bronze pots,

do cover the fingers with dirty black dots.
Those that have not done any good deeds,
Are like a garden full of weeds.
So it is with white clothed holy men who rob the innocents.
They are like pretty storks at places of worship'
whose diet alas includes frogs.
To become good and be able to do good in this world,
one needs the help of God."

Hearing this hymn, Sajjan immediately knew what it meant and for whom it was meant. As soon as Guru Nanak finished the hymn, Sajjan was so moved with guilt that he fell at Guru Nanak's feet, begged forgiveness and promised never to kill or cheat again. Sajjan's life transformed and he distributed all his wealth among the poor and started living like a true Sajjan in that land. The hymn had the desired effect and Sajjan turned into a friend indeed.

Guru Nanak in Pakpattan

From **Tulamba,** Guru Nanak reached **Harappa** which was not far away towards the north of Tulamba. Harappa is an ancient city which contains the ruins of a Bronze Age fortified city, which was part of the Indus Valley Civilization centered in Sindh and the Punjab. The city is believed to have had as many as 23,500 residents and occupied about 150 hectares (370 acres) with clay brick houses at its greatest extent during the Mature Harappan phase (2600 BC – 1900 BC), which is considered large for its time. The Indus Valley Civilization is also called the 'Harappan Civilization'. From Harappa, Guru Nanak reached Ajodhan (now known as Pakpattan).

Pakpattan (in the present day district of Sahiwal in Pakistani Punjab) is located on a bank of the Satluj and has been a famous place since the 13th century. It is famous as `Pakpattan Sharif of Farid Ganj-i-Shakar (Shakarganj). Two roads coming from the west joined in Pakpattan. One of them led to Pakpattan via Dera Ismail Khan, Multan, Shorkot and Harappa whereas the second one led to Pakpattan via Dera Ghazi Khan and Multan. Since both the roads joined together at this famous place, people like Sabuktdin, Mahmood of Ghazni, Amir Taimur and famous traveler Ibn Battuta passed through here.

Farid al-Din Ganj-i-Shakar (April 4, 1179 – May 7, 1266 AD) was Punjabi

Muslim preacher, mystic and poet who went on to become one of the most revered and distinguished Muslim mystics of the medieval period. He is known reverentially as Baba Farid by Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus of the Punjab Region, or simply as Fariduddin Ganjshakar. He was a Sunni Muslim and was one of the founding fathers of the Chishti Sufi order.

Born in Multan, Baba Farid received his early education there as well as Multan had become a center for Muslim education; it was there that he met his teacher Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, a noted Sufi saint, who was passing through Multan on his way from Baghdad to Delhi. Upon completing his education, Fariduddin Ganjshakar left for Sistan and Kandahar and went to Makkah for the Hajj pilgrimage with his parents at the age of 16. There are various explanations of why Baba Farid was given the title Shakar Ganj ('Treasure of Sugar'). One legend says his mother used to encourage the young Farid to pray by placing sugar under his prayer mat. Once, when she forgot, the young Farid found the sugar anyway, an experience that gave him more spiritual fervor and led to his being given the name.

It is said that when Farid Ganjshakar first came to Pakpattan in the thirteenth century, a Jogi by the name of Bir Nath lived here. At first, Jogi Bir Nath challenged Farid, but later on he became Farid's disciple. Jogi Bir Nath converted to Islam and later became popular as Pir Kamal.

One of Farid Ganjshakar’s most important contributions is to further Punjabi literature. He developed and improved the Punjabi language for literary purposes. Whereas Sanskrit, Arabic, Turkish and Persian had historically been considered the languages of the learned and the elite, and used in monastic centers, Punjabi was generally considered a less refined folk language. Although earlier poets had written in a primitive Punjabi, before Farid Ganjshakar there was little in Punjabi literature apart from traditional and anonymous ballads. By using Punjabi as the language of poetry, Farid Ganjshakar laid the basis for a vernacular Punjabi literature that would be developed later. Guru Nanak’s mastery in Punjabi poetry and the sweet, melodious and pleasant-sounding Rhymes are a testament to the beauty of Punjabi language.

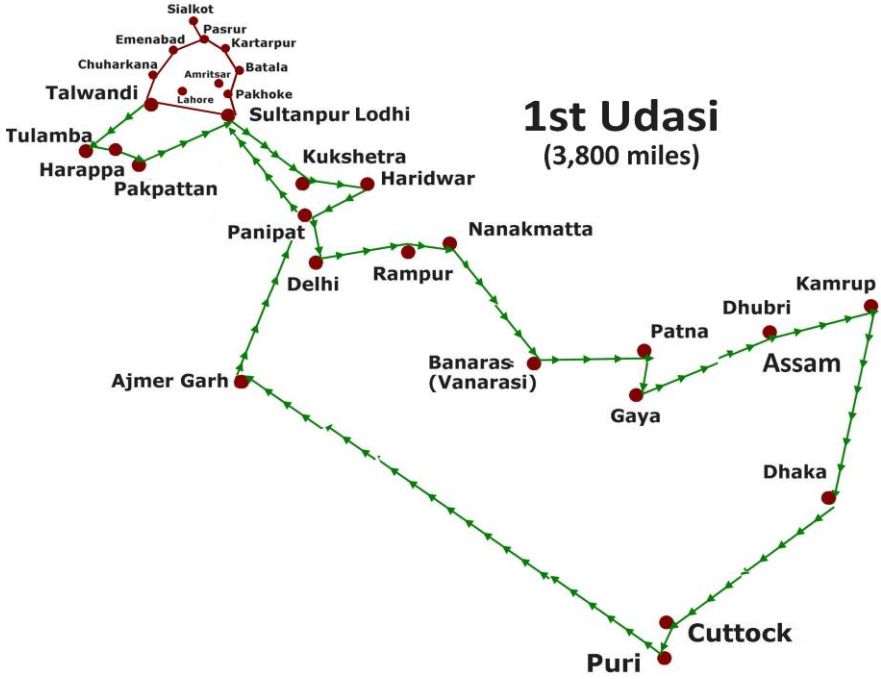
The Shrine of Baba Farid is located in Pakpattan, It is made of white marble with two doors, one facing east and called the Nuri Darwaza or 'Gate of Light', and the second facing north called Bahishti Darwaza, or

'Gate of Paradise'. It is said that Baba Farid's loaf made of wood and some dates are still preserved there. The devotees of Baba Farid Ganjshakar come in droves from far and near to pay their homage at this Shrine. It was also as a result of his respect for Baba Farid that Amir Taimur had forbidden his forces from ransacking this town. At that time Pakpattan was known as Ajodhan. Later on, it being a place sacred to the memory of Farid Ganjshakar came to be called Pakpattan.

Darbar (Shrine) Hazrat Baba Farid ud Deen Ganj Shakar

At Pakpattan, Guru Nanak met with Sheikh Brahm who was the eleventh in succession to Baba Farid, whose Bani is also included in Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru had a wide range of discussion with Sheikh Brahm.

Guru Nanak stated; *"Thou art the tablet, O Lord, Thou art the pen, and Thou art also the writing, Speak of the one God; O Nanak, why should there be second."* (Var Malar ki Mohalla 1, 28-2, p-1291).
The Sheikh asked Guru Nanak to explain; *"You say,'There is only one God, why should there be a second?'*, and the Sheikh asked: *"There is one Lord and two ways; Which shall I adopt, and which reject?"*
Guru Nanak replied; *"There is one Lord and one way; Adopt one and reject the other."*



According to villagers, the Pir Baba was a disciple of Guru Nanak. Legend has it that Guru Nanak visited Sheikh Brahm once again before heading for Mecca. A sacred shrine in the outskirts of the old city is related with Guru Nanak's visit to Pakpattan. This locality is known as Samadhan (previously there was a Gurdwara Nanaksar at Pakpattan City)

Baba Farid's poetry is also included in the Guru Granth Sahib, the most sacred scripture of Sikhism, which includes 123 (or 134) hymns composed by Farid. And, according to the Puratan Janamsakhi, the first nine pauries (stanzas) of the Asa di Var, were uttered by the Guru during the discussion with **Sheikh Brahm** and the other fifteen pauries of Asa di Var were uttered for Duni Chand Dhuper of Lahore.

Dr. Kirpal Singh who has been honored with the title of 'Professor of Sikhism' has done a great service for Sikh community by analyzing all Janamsakhi's and other sources on the life and time of Guru Nanak. This book 'Janamsakhi's Parampara' was first published in 1969. The Part II of Miharban Janamsakhi's records Guru Nanak's meeting with Sufi Saints and Fakirs. The names of these contemporary Muslim saints have

been confirmed from the book 'Tazkara-i-Sufia-i-Punjab' by Ahijazul Haq Kadusi published in Karachi, Pakistan. This Janamsakhi's is also the only document which provides valuable details of last years of Guru Nanak when he stayed at Kartarpur.

From Pakpattan Guru Nanak went to Sultanpur, then to Kurkshetra where he attending the occasion of solar eclipse. From there he went to Haridwar on the River Ganges. Then to Panipat, Delhi, Tanda Vanjara (Zila Rampur), Nanakmatta (Zila Nainital, U.P.) and then stopped in Banaras (Varanasi), where he exchanged views with a leading Hindu Pandit). From Banaras he went on to Patna and then to Gaya. From Gaya to Dhubri, which were centers of Buddhist and Hindu worship). Next he reached Kamrup in Assam (Asa Desh), where he had encounters with enchanting women and their magic. Returning through Dhaka and Cuttack he visited the famous temples of Jagannath at Puri on the Eastern Sea Coast and then the longest journey to Ajmer Garh, Sultanpur and to Talwandi. During this tour he had visited many important centers of the Hindu religion, and attended their festive occasions as well.

Watering the Crop Incident in Haridwar (1504 AD)

In 1504 AD, Guru Nanak with Bhai Mardana stopped at a sacred Hindu place on River Ganges called **Haridwar**, which means "God's Gate." This place, where three holy rivers join together was said to have been blessed by the Hindu gods, Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu. Huge crowds of people were gathered there. They were chanting and praying. Led by so-called holy men, called Brahmins, the people threw water towards the morning sun to honor people in their families who had died.

As this huge crowd of people chanted and threw water, Guru Nanak went into the river too and he also began throwing water. But there was something different about how he did it. Everyone was throwing water towards the rising sun, but Guru Nanak was throwing water in the exact opposite direction as everyone else. A crowd gathered around to see this crazy man. Obviously he didn't know what he was doing! A Brahman said, "If you are not Hindu why have you come to a Hindu place of worship?" "Yes" said another "Foolish man! Who has taught you to do such a strange thing?" Another one said, "Why on earth are you throwing water the wrong way?"

Guru Nanak looked at the Brahman and said, “Why do you throw water to the sun?” The Brahmin priest said proudly, “We throw water to the sun to honor our ancestors, it gives them happiness, blessings and prosperity.” “So, how far away are your ancestors?” Asked the Guru. A man nearby heard this conversation. He had read a lot of books, so he was considered a ‘learned man’ and people thought he had the right answers to everything. The man said, “Our ancestors live thousands and thousands of miles away.”

After listening to the ‘learned man’, Guru Nanak started throwing more water and with greater speed in the direction away from the sun. He was throwing the water faster and faster now, as though he was putting out a fire. As he splashed the water around, the Brahmans yelled, “STOP, STOP, what are you doing?” Guru Nanak was panting from all his splashing. He told them, “I have a farm in Talwandi, Punjab which is in this direction. My fields really need water, especially at this time of year. If I don’t get this water over to them, my crops might dry up.”

Now they really thought he was totally crazy. The ‘learned man’ among them asked, “How can water get from here all the way to Talwandi in Punjab?” The Guru said, “Well, my farm is much closer than your ancestors. How can water reach your ancestors if it can’t even reach my farm in Talwandi?” This was true – Nanak’s farm was much closer than the ancestors who, according to the Brahmins were thousands and thousands of miles away. The Brahmans still did not understand what this strange man was talking about. But Guru Nanak read their thoughts, and pointed to each one of them saying: “You were thinking of business you are going to do in Kabul,” the man he pointed at looked very surprised. That was exactly what he was thinking. Then Guru Nanak pointed to another man and said, “And you, dear Brahman, you are thinking of your business in Delhi.” Guru Nanak continued, “Pundit ji, you were thinking of how you are going to make money from the people who are coming here today.” He knew precisely what each of them was really thinking.

The men were shocked and defenseless. He had just proven that their minds were somewhere else entirely. Their minds were thinking of money and they didn’t hold God in their hearts. They were the spiritual leaders, but they were thinking of money instead of God. Guru Nanak had humbled them. “What can we do?” Asked the Pundit. The Guru said

“Sincerely pray from your heart. Be full of God every day and every moment. Help people, be with them and guide them to the Truth.” As these deep words sank in, the men stood there still in silence and these words registered to them; “What does it matter what we do or what religion we believe if we don’t keep God in our Hearts? Let us be honest with everyone, and especially with ourselves! Let us pray and meditate together with love in our hearts.”

At Haridwar, the place where Guru Nanak bathed and 'watering the crops' episode took place is called 'Kushawart Ghat', and a Gurdwara (Gurdwara Nanakwara) commemorates the visit. According to two Sikh Janamsakhis, this visit took place on the Baisakhi day in 1504 AD.
Guru Nanak returned home to Talwandi in 1506 AD. His parents, sister, his wife, children, Rai Bular and all others, whom he met after so long, were very happy with him. By now, Rai Bular and Kalu both had grown old. After a few weeks, Nanak started preparations for his second Udasi towards South of India towards the Deccan. Rai Bular and Kalu both insisted that Nanak should stay with them as they don’t know if they will ever see him again. But Nanak replied that he had much work to do yet to pass his message of love, peace and harmony. Guru Nanak explained for why he must leave his family and village to spread God’s message.
He says to his friend Rai Bular, “Raiji, it is God’s Hukam (order) that I am following.” When Nanak began to depart, Rai Bular said to him: *''Point me out some work (to do) Nanak.” Nanak said nothing with his mouth, but by signs gave him to understand: "Do you cause an unwalled tank to be dug here." The Rai, there and then, agreed (to do so), and Nanak, together with Bhai Mardana, began their journey from town to town and village to village.*

After Nanak’s departure Rai Bular called Kalu and said to him*, "Your son is a great man. He is the greatest honor of my town Talwandi. Kalu, thou hast become exalted and I too am exalted in whose town such a one has been born."* Guru Nanak reciprocated the honor and affection extended to him by Rai Bular and never failed in between his long travels to visit him, who always felt blessed to see him.

SECOND JOURNEY (1506 to 1513 AD)

He left Talwandi in late 1506 AD and headed south for central India.
It is said that during certain portions of the journey, he was also joined

by another companion sent by Rai Bular to assist him. He was a Hindu Jat (farmers) by the name of Bhai Bala who had become Nanak's disciple and travelled with them to testify his firm belief in the unity and universality of mankind. Facts around Bala are mentioned in various Janamsakhi's but agreement as to when and which journey's Bala was a part of are not yet clear. Two other 'Jats', Saida and Gheo are also mentioned as his companions in this long and arduous journey. During his second Travels, Guru Nanak went following places:

- Andhra Pradesh: Vijaywada, Guntur
- Tamil Nadu: Nagapatnam, Kanchipuram, Tiruvannamalai, Tiruchirapally, Trivanmalay, Rameshwaram
- Karnataka/Kerala: Cochin, Palghat, Nilgiri Hills, Rangapatan, Bidar
- Maharashtra: Nanded, Narsi Bamini, Barsi(Sholapur), Nasik, Poona, Amarnath, Nasik, Aurangabad
- Madhya Pradesh: Omkareshwar, Betma (Indore), Burhanpur (Khandwa), Gwarighat, Indaur, Ujjain
- Gujrat: Palitana, Dwarka, Bet Dwarka, Kutchh, Baroach, Junagarh, Vadodara
- Rajasthan: Jabalpur and Chitrakoot and Rikhanpur, Pushkar, Ajmer Garh,
- Sri Lanka (Sangladeep / Ceylon): Matiakalam, Jaffna, Katargama, Batticoloa, Sita Eliya

Discourse with Kauda Bheel

During his southern journey, there were many forests, barren lands and mountains to cross. According to Prof. Sahib Singh, Guru Nanak was travelling through a barren and dry area near Kudapa, which is today a village about 70 km from Vijayawada in the Andhra Pardesh section of India and the Guru entered the land of the 'Bheel' people. Area from Orrisa to Rameshwaram is called Dravirh and Bheel is a word for a 'Bow' in Dravirhian language. Bheel's were a non-Aryan (Dravidian) tribe which had been driven by the Aryans from fertile land into jungles and barren land and in order to survive the Bheels were known to eat human flesh as a last resort. They would also specifically direct their anger and revenge at Aryans and if they were to come across any Aryan, they would kill and eat them. Many Historians support the fact that the head of this Cannibal Bheel tribe was called Kauda Bheel. He was a large man with enormous strength and scary features. Kauda, like others of his tribe, hid in the brush of Kudapa and ambushed travelers who

passed through their areas, robbed them and then ate them.

One of Guru Nanak's famous encounter was with Kauda. Instead of fearing Kauda, Guru Nanak confronted him and persuaded him and his tribe to change their ways. As the story is told, Kauda saw three men coming towards him of their own free will. He felt lucky and prepared himself to assault and kill them. He had a large, deep, cauldron full of boiling oil with a constantly burning fire under it in his hut. When the three men approached, another Bheel from inside the hut screamed that the oil had stopped burning despite a strong fire. Kauda could not understand what had happened to the oil. The fire was strong but the oil was not burning. He decided instead to push one of the three men directly into the fire pit alive and capture the other two and tie them up for a later feast.

As the men approached. Guru Nanak was in the lead and in front and suddenly Kauda emerged from the bushes, caught him from behind and threw him into the fire pit. Instead of burning up, the fire just fizzled and died and Kauda began to tremble. Guru Nanak stepped out of the fire pit and just smiled at Kauda. Kauda immediately fell to the floor and started asking for mercy and forgiveness. Guru Nanak raised him up and comforted him and from that day, Kauda and his men all became disciples of Guru Nanak. There were other miraculous events during this journey. He visited many Budhistic and Jain temples on his way and proceeded towards the south of India reaching Sri Lanka. Here he met Raja Shivnabh of Sangla-deep (Ceylon). Raja Shivnabh showed great interest in Nanak's teachings. This itinerary left behind a legacy of a long list of Gurdwaras all the way down to the Jaffna in Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

The return journey to Punjab was made along the Western side of the South Indian Peninsula, then further northwards through the provinces of Gujarat and Sindh and to Multan and back to Talwandi.

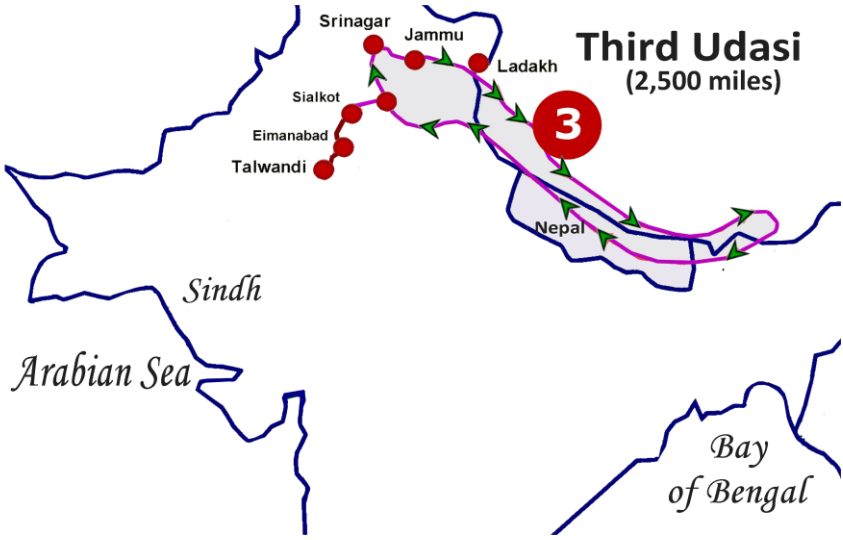
Meeting with Turkish Sultan, Beyzeid-11

A book in Turkish language mentions that the Turkish Sultan, Beyzeid-11 was visiting the Sultan of Delhi, Sikandar Lodhi in 1511 AD. He had ascended the throne after Bahlul Lodhi in 1489 AD. The name of the Sultan of Ottoman Empire was Mehmet -bin- Ibrahim and he adopted the name of Turkish 8th Sultan.

The books of Greek languages also confirmed the Sultan's visit to India. The book mentions his meeting with Guru Nanak in Ajmer Dargah in Rajasthan that year. This was probably when Guru Nanak was returning from Ceylon in 1511 AD. Later Sikandar Lodhi accompanied the Sultan Beyzeid-11 of Ottoman Empire to Lahore. Both Rai Bular Bhatti and Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi of Sultanpur Lodhi were invited to the grand dinner at Lahore. Both Rai Bular and the Nawab Daulat Khan spoke highly in praise of Guru Nanak Sahib. Sultan Bayzeid -11 told everyone present there that he (the Turkish Sultan) met Guru Nanak in Ajmer Garh in Rajasthan. This is how the Sultan family came to know of Guru Nanak in 1511 AD. Prof. Davinder Singh Chahal discovered a monument in Baghdad and later on in Istanbul dedicated to Guru Nanak. A 15 feet high & 6 feet wide monument constructed in mortar is situated in Public Park on shores of the straits of Bosporus.

THIRD JOURNEY (1515 – 1518 AD)

Upon returning to Sultanpur, Guru Nanak wanted to continue his journey to Kartarpur and on to Sialkot and then to the Northern Himalayan areas to Sumeru Parbat *(Sumeru Parbat is a 20,830 ft high mountain in the Gangotri Glacier region of Garhwal Himalaya, Uttarakhand, India)*. On his deathbed, Rai Bular Sahib had fervently prayed to God to grant him a final audience with Guru Nanak, before he bade farewell to the physical world. Guru Nanak, had on sensing the entreaties of the Rai, cut short this journey and hurried back to his native town of Rai Bhoe di Talwandi where he arrived in late spring of 1515 AD.



Soon after Guru Nanak arrived, both Bibi Nanaki and Rai Bular ji left for their heavenly abode. As one of her last wishes she willed her brother, Guru Nanak, to be by her side during her last days. *(Sources place her death in 1515 AD, the same year and month that Rai Bular died. Guru Nanak was on his third Udasi to the Himalayas and Tibet and had to cut his journey short and return to Talwandi as both Nanaki and Rai Bular were gravely ill).* Rai Bular Ji died while his head was in the lap of Guru Nanak Dev ji, in 1515. After completing the last rites of Rai Bular Ji, Guru Nanak again resumed his third travel –to the mountains in Northern India. Rai Bular is buried in Talwandi (now Nankana Sahib) on Dhaular mound where Guru Nanak used to play as a child and a tomb has been

constructed at his burial site. The tomb of Rai Bular is given the same respect and status of a Gurdwara by the Sikhs.

On Rai Bular's Death;

Bir Devinder Singh, Former Deputy Speaker, Punjab Legislative Assembly in Indian Punjab writes; *"Guru Nanak Dev ji was in the midst of his third travel at Sumer Parbat, when responding to Rai Bular ji's wish He returned to Rai Bhoi Di Talwandi and met Rai Bular ji. As per the narrative; soon after Rai Bular ji left for his heavenly abode while his head was in the lap of Guru Nanak Dev ji, in 1515. After completing the last rites of Rai Bular Ji, Guru Nanak again resumed his third travel. Such is the ecstatic and enrapturing association of Sikhs, as blessed by Guru Nanak Dev ji, with all the loving descendants of Rai Bular ji. This could never ever go in to oblivion or decimated by any power on the earth and certainly not with the passage of time."*

His third Udasi (tour) started in the summer of 1515 AD and lasted until 1518 AD) He covered the following towns and regions: Kashmir, Sumer Parbat, Nepal, Tashkent, Sikkim, Tibet. Guru Nanak was of the age of 46 when he went off in the Himalayan Mountains. At Mansarovar he held discussions with Sidhs—the followers of Guru Gorakhnath-who lived on alms, in seclusion away from human habitations. Guru Nanak criticized them for their unhealthy escape from life, rather than facing its problems. The Guru read to them a hymn, the essence whereof was `Abide-pure amidst impurities of the world'. During this journey, the Guru is said to have crossed the Himalayas and gone as far as Tibet.

On this journey, he was accompanied by Hassu, a black smith, and Sihan a washerman. The region travelled was generally mountainous, and his strange dress was mainly composed of skins and woollies. While on this journey he learned of the death of his beloved sister Nanaki in late 1515 AD as she had been seriously ill.

He walked through **Nepal** reaching western **Tibet** and met some famous Yogis (or Hermits) living in caves. His return journey back to Talwandi was through **Ladakh, Srinagar, Jammu**, **Sialkot and Kartarpur.** Guru Nanak returned to Talwandi from the North in 1518 AD.

In November of 1517 AD, Sikandar Lodhi, the Sultan of Delhi died and

his son Ibrahim Lodhi become the new Sultan of Delhi.

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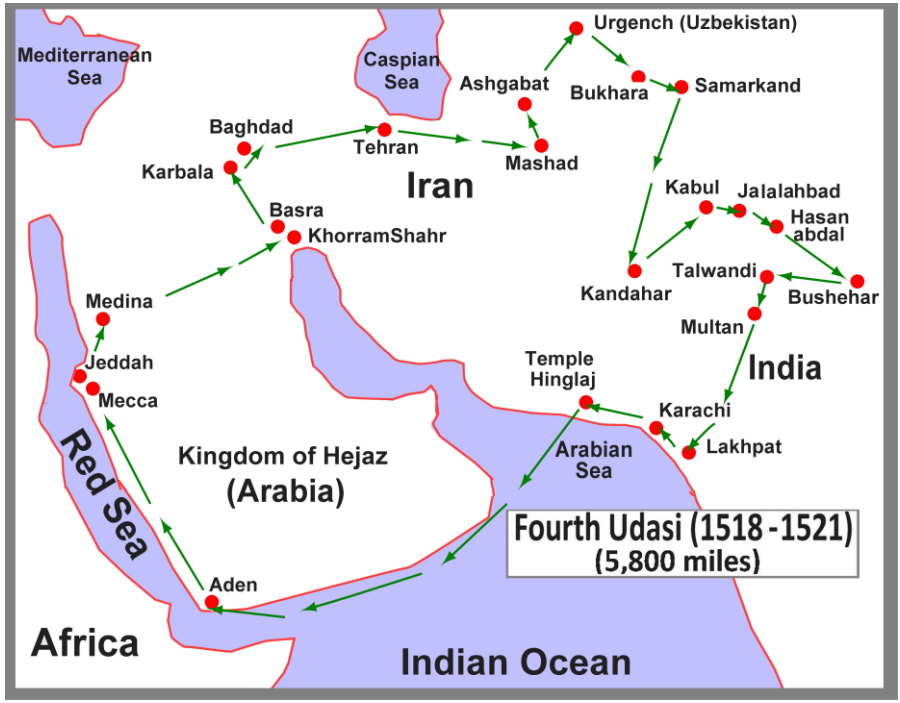
Guru Nanak's 3rd Udasi to the North (Himalayas and Tibet etc.)

FOURTH JOURNEY (1518 – 1521)

Soon after his return to Talwandi, he attired himself in a Muslim Haji's garb and left for Mecca. From Talwandi Guru Nanak proceeded to Multan, Uch, Sakkhar (Sukkur) and reached Lakhpat, where a Gurdwara now stands marking the memory of the Guru's visit. Then he reached Kuriani where a water tank is named after Guru Nanak. He visited Miani, about fifty miles west of the city of Karachi and visited the temples of Hindus and the Muslims in the area on the coast of the Arabian Sea. Near Hinglaj, there is a Dharmsala preserving the memory of the Guru Nanak's visit to this place. From there he boarded a 'Dow' (Arab Ship) to Aden and travelled by land to Mecca, Jeddah and Medina.

Fauja Singh and Kirpal Singh have mentioned that according to 'Janam Sakhis' (biographies of Guru Nanak) by Meharban and Bhai Mani Singh that Guru Nanak had also travelled to Palestine, Syria and Turkey, although there is no definite supporting evidence. Some writers of

Janam Sakhis have extended his travels even to some countries in Central Asia as well. The argument supporting these Janam Sakhis is equally compelling since most of these countries were part of Turkey at that time anyway. The Turks had conquered Herzegovina in 1482, Albania and Montenegro in 1498 AD, Sultanate of Egypt, Syria and Palestine in 1516, Kurdistan in 1519 and what is now Saudi Arabia were annexed in 1517 (first Hijaz with Mecca and Medina, and later Hasa, the strip of land along the Persian Gulf). So if a Janam Sakhi mentions 'Turkey', it is possibly any one of those above countries.



Where ever Guru spent a days, weeks or months, he left a legacy of Gurdwaras named after his visit. He certainly proved to be the greatest traveler on foot of his time covering thousands of miles on each journey.

GURU NANAK TRAVELS TO MECCA

One day, while in the Kaaba at Mecca, Guru Nanak fell asleep unmindful of the position in which he lay in. While he slept his feet swayed towards the Kaaba. Enraged at this act of disrespect to the holy place, Jiwan, a Muslim pilgrim kicked the Guru and woke him up saying `What

an infidel you are that you sleep with your feet towards God'. The Guru woke from his sleep and calmly replied `please turn my feet in the direction where God is not'. Everyone was amazed by Nanak's sense of God's omnipresence. Thereafter they embraced the Guru and Jiwan started a conversation. Others joined in and they questioned the Guru as to who was better, a Christian, Jew, Hindu or a Muslim. The Guru promptly replied; `God judges people by deeds and not by creeds'.

In some texts it is mentioned that when Guru Nanak was found sleeping with his feet towards Kaaba, the pilgrim called Qazi Ruknuddin to question Guru Nanak about his religion and the Guru responded, "I am a man of The Creator, and belong to no religion".

From Talwandi	1. Abdul Hakim	2. Sukkur
3. Lakhpat	4. Karachi	5. Kottari - Hinglaj Temple
6. Aden	7. Mecca	8. Jeddah
9. Medina	10. KhorramShahr	11. Basra
12. Karbala	13. Baghdad	14. Damascus (Syria)
15. Tehran	16. Mashad	17. Ashgabat (Turkmenistan)
18. Urgench (Uzbek)	19. Bukhara	20. Samarkand
21. Kandahar	22. Kabul	23. Jalalahbad
24. Hasan Abdal	25. Bushehar	26. Back to Talwandi

From Mecca Guru went to Medina where he was enlightened by the 'Riasat-e-Medina' in practice. Riasat-e-Medina or Dustur al-Madinah was the constitution of Medina drawn up on behalf of the Islamic prophet Muhammad shortly after his arrival at Medina (then known as Yathrib) in 622 AD (or 1 AH), following the Hijra from Mecca. The constitution formed the basis of the first multi-religious and multi-ethnic Islamic state in Medina.

Guru Nanak specifically was intrigued and impressed by the similarities of the 'Medina Riasat' with his own teachings of piety, compassion and equality among humans. In the Riasat constitution he noted that the non-Muslims had full security as the security of God is equal for all groups.

There was no class or cast system and no one went hungry. Non-Muslim members had the same political and cultural rights as Muslims and they had full autonomy and freedom of religion. Yes, Guru Nanak questioned the fact that with such compassionate teachings of Islam, how come the

Muslim rulers in India were not so compassionate? The answer may lie in the fact that the Afghan Pathan and Turko-Mongol conquerors of India were more Mongols than Muslims even though they had accepted Islam in form. They had failed to shed many Mongol practices (such as the militancy and barbaric practices of the Mongol Hoard ancestry) and perhaps were Muslims in 'Form and Not in Function' clinging to the memory of their former status in a highly militant and hierarchical society. Many Mongol converts to Islam did not start with orthodox Islam, but began by accepting a few basic features.

Guru Nanak asks the Mullah in Mecca; "Please turn my feet in the direction where God is not".

Guru Nanak was a humanist and always looked for goodness in other faiths and beliefs – and hence was keen on learning from Scholars, Saints and Sufis of all faiths. He saw much common ground in his thinking and the Quran. He concluded rightly that the Quran had given Muslims a sacred mission - to build a just economy in which everybody is treated with equity and respect. If the poor were oppressed, the vulnerable exploited or state institutions corrupt, Muslims were obliged to make every effort to put society back on track.

From Medina, Guru Nanak travelled to KhorramShahr, Basrah, Karbala, and then on to Baghdad in 1520 AD. In Baghdad he had a discourse with Pir Dastgir and other holy men of the place.

As S. M. Ikram, in his writing 'Muslim Civilization in India', Columbia University Press, 1964 states;
"Many Muslims did not start with orthodox Islam, but began by accepting a few basic features, and only in the course of time, became more orthodox. The process is less complete in the lower classes, or those groups which adopted a somewhat composite form of religion. More than religious beliefs, Islam in India retained certain characteristic features of Hindu society which, if not religious in themselves, certainly had been given religious sanction. One of these was the place given to caste, with converts (to Islam) clinging to some memory of their former status in a hierarchical society, while what may be called Muslim castes developed as Indian Muslims classified themselves as Sayyid, Shaikh, Mughal, Pathan – and Musalli, Mirassi etc.".

This structure was never very rigid; as the French physician François Bernier commented, "anyone who put on a white turban called himself a Mughal". An old saying makes the same point: "Last year I was a Julaha (weaver); this year a Shaikh; and next year if the harvest be good, I shall be a Sayyid." And in the mosque "the Islamic ideals of brotherhood and equality remained triumphant."… Islam in India and Pakistan - A Religious History By Dr.Y. P.Singh.

(Note: François Bernier (1620 –1688) was a French physician and adventurer. He was briefly personal physician to Mughal prince Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, and after Dara Shikoh's demise, was attached to the court of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb for 12 years during his stay in India.)

Notwithstanding wholesale condemnation of music by Muslims at that time, the Guru made them realize the importance of sacred music in human life. The Guru held spiritual discussions with many Sufi's in Baghdad. The Sufi's were much enamored of the Guru's logic, that they would get together at the place, where they had met him for over a year after he had left.

Guru Nanak then proceeded to Tehran, Ashghabat, Urgench (in Uzbekistan), Bukhara, Samarkand, Mashad, Kandhar, Kabul, Jalalabad, Hassan Abdal, to Bushehar and finally back to his home town, Talwandi.

Guru Nanak travelled approx. 18,000 miles on foot over a period of 20 years. The only Sea journey Guru Nanak ever made was on a 'Dow' from the Arabia Sea coast near Karachi to Aden, the port city of present day Yemen. *It is hard for people living in our modern world with all kinds of travelling comforts to Imagine walking unarmed on foot through deserts, forests, marsh land, winds, storms, mountains, rocks, hail, ice, snows and rain. These are just natural terrain and weather hazards. But then there are other natural hazards, such as venomous snakes, scorpions, poison-loaded lizards, bears, mountain lions, wild boars, wild dogs and so many other wild creatures. Finally there are the 'unnatural' hazards in the form of 'human beasts' – these are thieves, robbers, thugs, murderers, cannibals and just purely evil human beings who prey on travelers and strangers. Who else but a brave, bold, pure and blessed soul could make this long and arduous journey to promote a message of peace knowing very well all the hazards and risk that one may encounter.*

Other travelers who came close to Guru Nanak's travel on foot were Xuanzang (Chinese, 602 - 644 AD) who travelled 12,500 miles on foot, Marco Polo (Venetian, 1254 – 1324 AD) who travelled 13,000 miles on foot and Ibn Battuta (Moroccan, 1304 - 1368 AD) who travelled 14,000 miles on foot. This clearly makes Guru Nanak by far 'The Greatest Traveler' in human history.

GURU NANAK IN HASANABDAL

Guru Nanak along with Bhai Mardana reached Hasan Abdal in 1521 AD in the summer season. Under a shady cool tree, Guru Nanak and Bhai Mardana started reciting and singing their melodious and pleasant-sounding poems and local people gathered around them. This annoyed a local saint, Shah Wali Qandhari. According to legend, Bhai Mardana was sent three times to Shah Wali Qandhari by Guru Nanak so that he would provide them with some water to quench their thirst. Wali Qandhari refused his request and was rude to them. In spite of this, Mardana still very politely stuck to his requests. The Wali remarked: "Why don't you ask your Master whom you serve?"

Bhai Mardana went back to the Guru in a miserable state and said "Oh Guru! I prefer death to thirst but will not approach Wali the egoist again." The Guru replied "Oh Bhai Mardana! Repeat the Name of God, the Almighty; and drink the water to your heart's content." With this the Guru pushed aside a big rock lying nearby and a pure fountain of water sprang up and began to flow endlessly. Bhai Mardana quenched his thirst and felt grateful to the Guru. On the other hand, the fountain of Shah Wali Qandhari dried up. On witnessing this, the Wali in his rage threw a large boulder towards the Guru from the top of the hill. The Guru stopped the hurled boulder with his hand leaving his hand print in the rock. Observing that miracle, Shah Wali Qandhari was astonished and immediately came down the hill to apologize and offered his respect and hospitality to Guru Nanak.

The boulder with a clearly visible hand imprint is embedded in the concrete structure of the building complex of Panja Sahib. Clear fresh water gushing out from somewhere in the ground cascades down the face of the rock, washing the hand imprint, into a very large pool. Next to the pool, on an elevated platform, stands a beautiful Gurdwara, built by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh (1780 -1839 AD).

This holy and revered place where this incident took place in 1521 AD was named ‘Panja Sahib’ by Hari Singh Nalwa, the most famous general and Commander-in-chief of the Sikh Khalsa Fauj, the army of the Sikh Empire. Hari Singh Nalwa is known for his role in the conquests of Kasur, Sialkot, Attock, Multan, Kashmir, Peshawar and Jamrud and he is also the founder of Haripur city in Pakistan, which is named after him. Hari Singh built the first Gurdwara at this place to commemorate Guru Nanak's journey through that region.

Gurdwara Panja Sahib is considered to be particularly important as the

handprint of Guru Nanak is believed to be imprinted on a boulder at the Gurdwara.

Gurdwara Panja Sahib in Hasanabdal, Pakistan

Last Visit to Talwandi

Finally Guru Nanak returned to Talwandi for the last time in 1521 AD. His father Mehta Kalu was seriously ill and died the following year in 1522 AD. Mehta Kalu who was originally a Hindu, became a disciple of the Guru, his son and stayed committed to Nanak throughout his life. After his father's death, Nanak did not stay long in Talwandi and moved to Emenabad (Saidpur) with his friend Lalu the Carpenter as everyone

he knew in Talwandi had died and had passed away, except his uncle who too was now old and frail. Nanak was almost 52 years old and Bhai Mardana almost 62 years when they last returned to Talwandi. There is very little known of Bhai Mardana after this last journey with Nanak. In some writings, Guru Nanak and Bhai Mardana made another trip to Baghdad in 1534 AD. There is some dispute among the historian about this trip and the place where Bhai Mardana died but it is believed that he fell ill and died in Baghdad on the return journey (Udasi). In 1534, Bhai Mardana would have been 75 years old so it is highly unlikely that a 75 year old man would be travelling on foot through deserts, mountains, rocks and snow. There are other stories of Bhai Mardana falling ill near Kabul on way to Baghdad and he died there. There is a high probability of this being correct as he was too old to make the journey by foot. Notwithstanding where Bhai Mardana died, history facts do support that with a heavy heart Guru Nanak performed the obsequies of his lifelong Muslim friend, companion and devotee, Bhai Mardana with his own hands. A humble monument apparently was also erected in memory of Mardana.

The complete travels of Guru Nanak are still to be discovered. This is evident from the research and information collected by Fauja Singh and Kirpal Singh on the discourses held between Guru Nanak and the heads of various religious centers. Some discourses, e.g. Sidh Gosht, Arti, and Onkar Bani are found in the Aadh Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) and some isolated verses of Guru Nanak are linked to some travels in some Janam Sakhis but it many are yet to be documented.

MUGHAL WAR-LORDS INVADE INDIA

The Lodhi Dynasty ruled Northern India from 1451 to 1526 AD, which spans almost all of all of Guru Nanak's life. Sikandar Lodhi, the second son of Bahlul, succeeded him and ruled from 1489 to 1517 AD. Ibrahim Lodhi, the youngest son of Sikandar succeed him and ruled from 1517–1526 AD. Ibrahim Lodhi had the qualities of an excellent warrior, but as a ruler he was cruel and rash in his decisions and actions. His policy of sheer repression, poor administration and wastage in military spending and resources was to eventually give rise to numerous rebellions. Most prominent among them was the rebellion by Daulat Khan Lodhi, the Governor of Lahore who eventually invited the Turko-Mongol warrior-lord Zahir-ud-din Babar, a descendant of both Chengiz khan and Amir Timur. Daulat Khan Lodhi gave strong assurances of victory to the invading Babur to put an end to the much despised rule of Ibrahim Lodhi in 1526 AD.

Coins of Bahlul Khan Lodhi, circa 1455 AD, excavated in Punjab

Daulat Khan Lodhi was a relative of Bahlol Khan Lodhi and had been made governor of Lahore by Bahlol Khan with his Darbar (Court) at Sultanpur Lodhi. It was a common practice for rulers to marry into powerful chiefs to make strong alliances and gain loyalty. For this, he had married the sister of Rai Bular, who was the largest and most influential landlord in Daulat Khan's domain at that time.

It was due to his personal animosity with Ibrahim Lodhi that Daulat Khan invited Babur to invade the kingdom. In 1523 AD, Ibrahim Lodhi was locked in a power struggle with his relatives and ministers. Daulat Khan was one of Ibrahim's chief opponents, along with the ruler's own uncle, Alam Khan Lodhi (also known as Ala-ud-din), who at that time was living under the protection of Sultan Muzaffar of Gujarat. There was

rebellion throughout the empire. Aware of his own precarious position, Daulat Khan Lodhi sent his son, Ghazi Khan Lodhi, to Delhi to learn more about the state of affairs in the Lodhi government. On his return, Ghazi Khan warned his father that Ibrahim Lodhi was planning to remove him from his governorship. In response, Daulat Khan Lodhi sent messengers to Babur in Kabul, offering his allegiance and assistance against Ibrahim Lodhi in exchange for the control over Lahore and Sultanpur Lodhi. Babur was reluctant even after two years of persistent requests from Daulat Khan. It was only when one of Daulat Khan's youngest son, a nephew of Rai Bular was assassinated by Ibrahim Lodhi that Ghazi Khan Lodhi, his other son went to Kabul to deliver Babur a hand written and signed letter from his father Daulat Khan, with a gift of half-ripened mangoes preserved in honey. When the letter and the gift was set before Babur, he accepted them as a sincere gesture, and from that time forth, made preparation for a move on Hindustan.

MUGHAL EMPIRE - THE ACCIDENTAL EMPIRE

To a large extent, the Mughal empire was accidental. It is likely that the limit of Babur's aims — even when he had set out to India in late 1525 AD— had been to incorporate the Punjab into his kingdom and rule it from Kabul, rather than to penetrate deep into India. But as opportunistic as ever, Babur took his chance to seize a greater prize. This development to penetrate deep into India did not appeal to Babur's commanders and was not welcomed as their interest was to just raid and then turn their attention to Samarkand and Bukhara, their main focus. India to them was a place to raid for its riches, and many of them were aghast when it emerged that Babur intended to remain in the new country to rule, rather than return home with their booty. Babur himself was unimpressed with his conquest, as he complained in his book 'the BaburNama' that; "Hindustan lacked good bread, melons, dogs, horses, grapes and candles". The hot climate also horrified the Mughals, used as they were to temperate Kabul. Nonetheless, Babur decided to stay in India as the founder of a dynasty. For him, the accidental conquest of India represented a chance of glory, an opportunity to exceed the modest boundaries of the kingdom of Kabul and to ensure lasting fame. Although he would have preferred an empire centered on Samarkand, India would suffice. It was undoubtedly wealthy, and it was in the early days of the Mughal conquest that one of the legendary treasures of India first emerged into recorded

history: the Koh-i-Noor, or `Mountain of Light', the most famous diamond in the world. After the battle of Panipat, Humayun, his son and heir, had been sent ahead of his father to secure the central lands of the Dehli Sultanate in preparation for the triumphal advance of the conqueror. In restoring order in these areas Humayun did a service to the royal house of Gwalior, vassal Kings of the Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi, and in return the family gave him the wondrous jewel in their gratitude. When Babur arrived in Agra, Humayun presented the Koh-i-Noor (although it was not known by that name at that time) to his father. From "The Khyber Pass, A History of the Empire and Invasion" by Paddy Docherty, British Historian and Author. *(Note: The Koh-i-Noor has a complex history that goes back to the 13th century. This large colorless diamond weighed around 793 carats and originated in India's Golconda mines when they were under the rule of the Kakatiya dynasty. In the early 14th century, Ala-uddin Khilji, second ruler of the Khilji dynasty of the Delhi Sultanate, and his army began looting the kingdoms of southern India. During a raid on Warangal, Malik Kafur (Khilji's general) acquired the priceless diamond for the Khilji dynasty. It was then passed on to the succeeding dynasties of the Delhi Sultanate).*

In April 21, 1526 AD, the Mughal forces of Babur, the King of Farghana, Kabulistan (Kabul, present day Afghanistan), defeated Ibrahim Lodhi's much larger army in the Battle of Panipat. Ibrahim Lodhi was helped by Maharaja Lakshminath Singh Deva Jha (Shahdeo) of Mithila (Tirhut). Both Ibrahim Lodhi and Maharaja Lakshminath were killed during the ensuing battle. It is estimated that Babur's forces numbered around 12,000 to 15,000 men and he had between 20 and 24 pieces of field artillery. Ibrahim Lodhi on the other hand far outnumbered Babur's forces and had around 100,000 to 120,000 men along with at least 300 war elephants.

After the defeat of Ibrahim Lodhi, the end of Lodhi dynasty gave rise to the era of Mughal rule. Babur's army quickly captured Lahore and Dipalpur. Daulat Khan and his sons, Ghazi and Dilawar Lodhi, joined Babur at Dipalpur only to be disappointed when Babur presented Daulat Khan with Jullandur and Sultanpur instead of Lahore. Rather than accept these assignments, Daulat Khan and Ghazi went into hiding while Dilawar Lodhi betrayed his father and accepted Sultanpur and the title of Khan Khanan. Daulat Khan eventually emerged a short while later

when Babur left India to fight the Uzbeks at Balkh while leaving some forces in Lahore to assist Alam Khan's attempted siege of Delhi. Daulat Khan offered his assistance to Alam Khan in his siege hoping to recover Lahore. However, since Daulat Khan was no longer on friendly terms with Babur, his assistance was declined by Alam Khan. Instead, he was left in charge of Punjab with his son Ghazi, while his other sons, Dilawar and Hajji went to Delhi with Alam Khan. This attack was unsuccessful due to treachery on both sides. On his way back to India, Babur heard of Alam Khan's failure in Delhi and Sialkot. Meanwhile, Daulat Khan and Ghazi, hearing of Babur's return, fled to the fortress of Milwat, north of Lahore. Babur laid siege to Milwat fort and Daulat Khan Lodhi surrendered. He was made prisoner and died on the way to Bhera (now in Tehsil Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan), where he was to spend his remaining years as a prisoner.

Guru Nanak was 57 years old when Babar invaded. He was staying in Saidpur with his friend Lalu the carpenter since his return from Mecca in 1521 AD. Due to his age, Guru Nanak was now lovingly called 'Baba Nanak'.

In 1526 AD after Babur had taken control of Lahore, the Mughal army had controlled all the territory between Delhi to Sialkot. Babur's Army looted, sacked and killed people in the thousands. When Babur captured Saidpur, many citizens, were imprisoned and forced to work on a stone mill. Guru Nanak and Bhai Mardana were among those imprisoned and made to grind wheat and corn for the victorious army. Guru Nanak bewailed the woes and miseries of the down-trodden people and poured out his heart in deep anguish thus:

"How strange is Thy dispensation, O' Lord.
How incomprehensible are Thy ways.
All is death confusion now.
But all happens as it pleases Him,
O'Nanak how can man resist His Will?"

Guru Nanak's poem 'Babur Bani' (Babar-Vani), included in the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikhism's central scripture and its 11th and eternal guru, beautifully captures the destruction that the king left at Emenabad (Saidpur) in its aftermath. He writes:

“Bringing the marriage party of sin,
Babar has invaded from Kabul,
demanding our land as his wedding gift, O Lalo...
...The Qazis and the Brahmins have lost their roles,
and Satan now conducts the marriage rites, O Lalo...
...The wedding songs of murder are sung, O Nanak,
and blood is sprinkled instead of saffron, O Lalo.”

The poem mentions that Babur’s forces did not differentiate between Muslims and Hindus. Both fell victim to his wrath, which Nanak sarcastically calls “justice” of god. Guru Nanak accounts for all these sufferings and ruins. He further narrated in Babar-Vani occurring on page 417 of the Holy Granth.

`When the Lord wishes to destroy one .. He first destroys one's virtues'.

Today, the Gurdwara Chakki Sahib is located at the spot where Nanak was imprisoned and was made to grind corn. When Babur heard of Guru Nanak’s imprisonment he was extremely disturbed as he had known of the Saint’s existence and deeds. And, it would be at Emperor Babur’s orders Baba Nanak was released and meeting would take place between Babur and Baba Nanak. The message given by Baba Nanak to Emperor Babur was very simple. He stated that if the rule of tolerance and justice would become the basis of rule of the Mughal Empire than the heirs of Babur would rule for a 1,000 years. If the rule of the Mughal Sultanate turned to become one of intolerance and discrimination than the empire would vanish in large part, in less than seven generations.

Sadly Babur only ruled for just 4 years and died on December 26, 1530 AD. On his death bed Emperor Babur stated that the rule of India was like seasons, as they passed from one to another, so did the diversity of beliefs in India.

The relationship between Baba Guru Nanak, and Emperor Babur is a very unique story in the long history of India. Baba Nanak, witnessed the initial cruelty of the invasion of North India by Babur and his relatively small Army. Baba Nanak would openly criticize the heinous loss of life and pillaging of temples by this new ruler. Nanak attempted to reason with Babur, and fortunately they found common ground as both seemed to despise India’s age old traditions and both were leaning

towards an enlightened approach to life.

Emperor Babur meets with Guru Nanak

The Historical Milieu of the Sikh Gurus' Relations with the Mughal Emperors

Guru Nanak had witnessed the defeat of the Turkic Lodhi rulers of Delhi and the rise of the Mughal regime under the leadership of the descendant of Timur, the victorious Babar Padshah (Emperor). The defeated Turkic Lodhi rulers and the Mughal victors were professing Sunni Muslims. Both camps were related by bloodline to the Turko-Mongol clan of conquerors (the Al-Khanids and the Timurids) who ruled Middle East, Central Asia, and North India. In spite of his destructive role Babar is seen by Guru Nanak to have been an unwitting instrument of the divine Will. Because the Lodhis had violated God's laws, they had to pay the penalty. Babar descended from Kabul as God's chosen agent, demonstrating the absolute authority of God and the retribution which must follow defiance of His laws. Guru Nanak's commentary on the events which he actually witnessed thus becomes a part of the same universal message. God is absolute and no man may disobey His commands with impunity. Obey Him and receive freedom. Disobey him and the result must inevitably be retribution, a dire reckoning which brings suffering in this present life and continued transmigration in the hereafter.

In his short reign of four years, Babur laid out the vision of the Mughal Empire for his heirs and dynasty. Babur's 'Wasiyyat Nama' (will and secret testament) to his son and successor, Humayun, embodies in it his administrative policy, which was scrupulously adopted by Humayun and carried to its logical conclusion by Akbar and his successors. It preaches peace and enjoins tolerance as the motto of Mughal Rule in India, and contains the essence of its author's administrative genius. As a monument of enlightened statesmanship and a document of unique historical importance, it deserves to be reproduced here. It reads: *"GOD BE PRAISED - Secret testament of Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar Badshah Ghazi to Prince Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Humayun. May God prolong his life! For the stability of the Empire this is written. O my son! The realm of Hindustan is full of diverse creeds. Praise be to God, the Righteous, the Glorious, the Highest, that He hath granted unto thee the Empire of it. It is but proper that thou, with heart cleansed of all religious bigotry, should dispense justice according to the tenets of each community. And in particular refrain from the sacrifice of cow, for that way lies the conquest of the hearts of the people of Hindustan; and the subjects of the realm will, through royal favor, be devoted to thee. And the temples and abodes of worship of every community under Imperial sway, you should not damage. Dispense justice so that the sovereign may be happy with the subjects and likewise the subjects with their sovereign. The progress of Islam is better by the sword of kindness, not by the sword of oppression. Ignore the disputations of Shias and Sunnis; for therein is the weakness of Islam. And bring together the subjects* with *different beliefs in the manner of the Four Elements, so that the body-politic may be immune from the various ailments. And remember the deeds of Hazrat Taimur Sahib-qarni (Lord of the conjuction) so that you may become mature in matters of Government And on us is but the duty to advise.* (*First Jamadi-ul-Awwal 935H - 11th January, 1529 AD.)*

The original document is in Persian and is treasured in the Hamida Library at Bhopal as one of its heirlooms. It was first published in the 20th century in Allahabad by Mr. N. C. Mehta, I. C. S. with an English translation by Nawab Sahib of Bhopal. Babar's message is only one of the numerous Imperial Firmans (orders) which were issued from time to time by the Mughal Emperors according to the requirements of the time. Babur's legacy was adopted by Humayun, Akbar, Jehangir and Shahjahan – demonstrating a heavy influence from the movements founded by Baba Nanak and Sant Kabir. These principles would reach an

epitome of national implementation by Emperor Akbar. Akbar married the daughter of a Hindu-Rajput Raja Bharmal of Amber in 1562 AD. The Hindu princess Hira Kunwari (also known as Jodha Bai) would give birth to Emperor Jehangir. Emperor Akbar even went to a 'Langar' and met with Guru Amar Das (the 3rd Guru) to show his humility and respect for other faiths. It would be Emperor Akbar, who would grant the land for the construction of the Golden Temple in Amritsar, India, in 1580 AD. India became the world's first Secular State under the Mughals. Many Hindu scholars such as Jagannatha Panditaraja and Kavindracharya were employed by Shah Jahan who taught Prince Dara Sikhoh.

Sant Kabir was a 15th-century Indian mystic poet and saint, whose writings, according to some scholars, influenced Hinduism's Bhakti movement. (His dates are uncertain, some scholars giving his birth date as 1398 AD, and some as late as 1440, but it is generally agreed that he flourished in the middle of the fifteenth century). There has also been much controversy concerning his religious origins, but it is quite likely that he was born into a Muslim family. The names of Kabir and Kamal, his son, are both Islamic names. According to the popular Tazkirah-i-Auliya-i-Hind (Lives of Muslim Saints), he was a disciple of the Muslim Sufi, Shaikh Taqi. A further indication of his Muslim origin is that his grave at Maghar has always been in the keeping of Muslims.

According to one tradition Kabir was a disciple of Ramananda, the great mystic who is credited with the spread of Bhakti doctrines in North India. That Ramananda himself was influenced by Islam is not certain, but his willingness to admit people of all castes and religions, including Islam, as his disciples, suggests the possibility of this. The right conclusion seems to be that Kabir was a Muslim Sufi who, having come under Ramananda's influence, accepted some Hindu ideas and tried to reconcile Hinduism and Islam. However it was the Hindus, and particularly those of the lower classes, to whom his message appealed.

Kabir was above all a religious radical who denounced with equal zest the narrowness of Islamic and Hindu rituals and sectarianism. Kabir is known for being critical of both Hinduism and Islam, stating that the Hinduism was misguided by the Vedas, and questioned the meaningless rites of initiation such as the sacred thread among others. Kabir suggested that God is within the person who is on the

path of righteousness, and thus considered all creatures on earth as his own self, and was passively detached from the affairs of the world. In his lifetime, he was threatened by both Hindus and Muslims for his views but when he died, both Hindus and Muslims had claimed him as theirs.

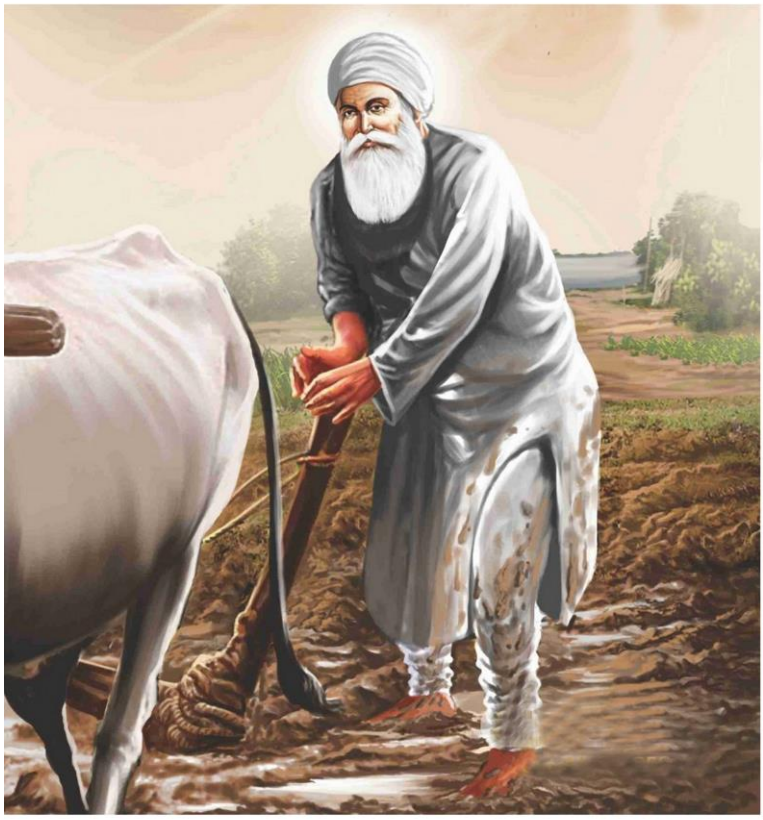
Settling in Kartarpur and the Three Principles

Guru Nanak's first visit to Kartarpur was in around 1504 AD. Kartarpur was a sleepy little village on the Banks of River Ravi (located in the present day tehsil Shakargarh, Narowal District in Punjab, Pakistan) approx. 100 km upstream from Talwandi. Guru Nanak, would retreat to Kartarpur between his journeys as the town offered solitude essential for meditation. His companions and followers would assemble there and he established the first Sikh commune ('Learners Commune') there.

The name Kartarpur means "place of God". Here all people, irrespective of their religion or caste, lived together as one family. After his travels, Guru Nanak settled in Kartarpur along with his family at the end of 1526 AD or early 1527 AD. Thus it was in Kartarpur that Guru Nanak put to the test Sikhi and its new way of life; he built up this township as a Utopia city. It is here that he put all his life's 'learning' to practice. The institutional development of Sikhi, (for instance, sangat and pangat) started at Kartarpur. By the time of the tenth Guru many such new townships in Punjab had taken root from Kartarpur model. Townships such as Khadur Sahib, Goindwal, Taran Taaran, Amritsar and finally on to Anandpur, among others; and the infrastructure of Punjab was built by the successor Gurus, one Guru at a time. This is how the foundation of a new faith built around 'Humanity First', independent of Hindu, Buddhist, Zain, Christian, and Islamic practices, was firmly established.

T. L. Vaswani in his book `A prophet of the people' writes at page 69, `Work and worship, love and labor, silence and song blended together in the life at Kartarpur.' Here for 13 years the Guru gave practical demonstration of a truthful living which according to him was higher than Truth itself. Here the people learnt with him how to live pure amidst the impurities of life.

The Golden Temple, Amritsar
Painting by: Edwin Lord Weeks, American Painter, c.1880



Guru Nanak believed in 'working to earn a living' and worked in his fields well into his last living days. His old age and weary and tired body did not stop him from setting an example for others.

In Kartarpur, Guru Nanak was to set himself as a living role model for everything good he had learned in his life and his journeys. He summed it up as ***"Truth is high, but higher still is truthful living"***. Guru Nanak's message of Truthful Living is built on three basic principles, which he laid down for his Sikhs. They are; **KIRAT KARNA** (Working in earnest), **NAAM JAPPNA** (Remembering God) and **WAND CHHAKHNA** (Sharing food).

1. KIRAT KARNA means earning one's livelihood by honest means by applying one's self sincerely to work. Guru Nanak himself worked till the end of life on his land. In doing so, he taught others that every human being has a potential for earning enough for a reasonable living. It is not good to be a burden on others or living on charity or grants. Exploitation

of labor is equally bad. In India at that time there were many beggars and wandering 'Sadhus' and so called holy men living on other people's charity. Guru Nanak was particular to advise everyone he met not to do so. According to Nanak; *"One who delivers Sermons but begs alms door to door, Is blind of mind and devoid of self-respect."*

2. NAAM JAPPNA means reciting or meditating in the name of God, and thanking Him for the gift of life and living. The Guru's advised people he met; *"Remember God all the time and help others to recite His name."*

This art of meditating in God's name is called SIMRAN. But Guru Nanak also warned of the futility of any such exercise or meditation with an empty stomach. He said; *"Rosary is no help to the hungry devotee".*
It is difficult for an ordinary person to concentrate on God's name when the stomach is empty and rumbling all the time. Not eating enough, leads to a weak body and in turn to a weak mind. That is why Guru Nanak advised others to work to eat, and eat to pray. The order is simple and sensible. Not eating enough is not to be confused with fasting. Fasting is a practice to giving the stomach rest and in moderation is good for the health.

3. WAND CHHAKHNA literally means sharing your meal with the one who is without a means to earn enough to even eat. Guru Nanak believed that one must do something for the benefit of the less fortunate members of the community. His could be people who are unable to work, extremely sick or otherwise handicapped, old people, and children who are orphaned etc. Earning more is not a bad thing provided the benefits are shared with the needy.

"He alone treads the path of righteousness
Who earneth his bread with hard labor
And shareth it with others, sayeth Nanak"

Guru Nanak himself demonstrated to others the working of the above three principles of truthful living in improving the individual, as well as the whole community. In his 'Learning Commune' (Sikh Commune) in Kartarpur, he was able to blend all the above three as an example and future practice. It was also here that the first institution of LANGAR (free kitchen) was established by Guru Nanak.

"In good and virtuous action lay the quintessence of a religion.
It is not words that saint or sinner make,
It is action alone that is written in his book of fate.
His practical life of meditation and service and his thorough humbleness serve as beacon light to the world."

The principle of truthful living also incorporate the concept of SEVA (selfless service). This service or SEVA is recognized in either of the three ways i.e. TANN, MANN and DHANN. 'TANN' means body; service or help which involves a personal physical effort to do some job or work for non- personal benefits e.g. helping to cook or clean in the Langar. 'DHANN' means money; service or any other work which involves help in the form of cash or kind, e.g. bags of flour, milk, butter vegetables etc. for running the Langar (free kitchen for all) and 'MANN' means mind; one must remember that just as words without actions have no value, similarly any service without sincerity of mind has no merit.

DEATH OF GURU NANAK

At the age of 70, Guru Nanak sensed that he will be departing to the eternal abode. Before his death, he chose one of his true devotees, Bhai Lehna, to be his successor and transmitting the light of the Guru into him since neither his elder son, Siri Chand, nor his younger merchant son Lakhmi Das, met with Guru Nanak's criteria for the next Guru. He named him 'Guru Anga' i.e. Guru's limb or Guru's own self. Guru Angad would carry forward his message as compiled in a Pothi (a notebook of Guru's teachings). This Pothi later became the basics of a larger collection of teachings by the successive Gurus to form the Sikh holy book called the 'Guru Granth Sahib'.

A few days later after appointing Guru Angad, on Sept. 22, 1539, the great humanist Guru Nanak quietly passed into God's abode. There arose a controversy between the Hindus and Muslims regarding the disposal of his earthly remains. The Hindus claimed that he was their Guru, while Muslims called him their 'Pir' and accordingly each party wanted to perform the last rites in its own way. Both, the Muslims and the Hindus had accepted Guru Nanak as a reformer and a revolutionary, and that bears to the universality of his teachings and the love and respect they all had for him. He is buried at Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, in Kartarpur, present day Pakistan – approx. 84 miles upstream on River Ravi from his birth place Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi.

The Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur, close to the Pakistan-India border, is one of the holiest sites in Sikhism. The temple is located around 4km (2.5 miles) from the border with India. The main shrine building was built in 1925 by Sardar Bhupindar Singh, the Maharaja of Patiala. The new Kartarpur Corridor was inaugurated on Nov. 12, 2019 and links Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur, Narowal Pakistan, and Dera Baba Nanak shrine, Gurdaspur, India.

The original Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur, (now in Pakistan) was built in 1925 by Sardar Bhupindar Singh, the Maharaja of Patiala.

SIKH FAITH POST GURU NANAK'S DEATH

The founder of the Mughal dynasty, Babur had died in 1530 AD (December 26, 1530) in Agra, India. He had only been an Emperor of India for 4 years. Hardly any time to adjust to the new land and its culture and customs. His son Humayun was crowned Emperor the same day at the young age of 22.

Guru Nanak died in 1539 and just eight months after Guru Nanak's death, the infant Mughal Empire suffered its first defeat in May of 1540 AD at the hands of Sher Shah Suri. Sher Shah Suri was one of eight sons of Mian Hassan Khan Suri, a prominent figure in the government of Bahlul Khan Lodi in Narnaul Pargana. Sher Shah belonged to the Pashtun Sur tribe. His grandfather, Ibrahim Khan Suri, was a noble adventurer from Roh who was recruited much earlier by Sultan Bahlul Lodi of Delhi during his long contest with the Jaunpur Sultanate.

Relationship of Guru Angad with the Mughal Emperor Humayun
Humayun, the second Mughal Emperor of India, visited Guru Angad in around 1540 AD after he lost the Battle of Kannauj, and thereby the Mughal throne to Sher Shah Suri. According to Sikh hagiographies, when Humayun was on the run he arrived in Gurdwara Mal Akhara Sahib at Khadur Sahib. Guru Angad was sitting and listening to hymns of the sangat. The failure of the Guru to greet the Emperor immediately angered Humayun. Humayun lashed out at him but the Guru calm and reminded him; "The time when you needed to fight you lost your throne and you ran away and did not fight. Now you want to attack a person engaged in prayer". Humayun was humbled and apologized for his arrogance. In the Sikh texts Guru Angad is said to have blessed Humayun and reassured him that someday he will regain the throne.

After Humayun's defeat, the Mughal Emperor had to flee India and stay in exile for 15 years in Persia. Unfortunately for the Sur dynasty, Sher Shah Suri died from a gunpowder explosion during the siege of Kalinjar fort on May 22, 1545 fighting against the Chandel Rajputs. Had it not been for his untimely death, the Sur dynasty would not have declined and perished and the Mughal Empire may never have been re-established.

Sher Shah Suri's second son Islam Shah Suri succeeded him. Islam Shah Suri died nine years later in 1554 AD. These two deaths left the Suri dynasty reeling and disintegrating. In the following year four other Suri rulers would come and go. When Humayun who was living in Isphan, Iran under the protection of Shah Tahmasp–I, learned of the chaos in India, he decided to return with an Army to regain the throne. Shah Tahmasp of Iran provided Humayun with 12,000 cavalry and 300 veterans of his personal guard along with provisions, so that his guest may recover his lost domain. After defeating the 6th Suri ruler, Sikandar Shah Suri, decisively at the Battle of Sirhind on June 22, 1555 AD, Humayun re-established the Mughal Empire in India.

After the death of Guru Nanak in 1539 AD, **Guru Angad** followed the Sikh tradition set by Guru Nanak. Instead of his own son, Guru Angad chose his disciple **Guru Amar Das** as his successor and the **3rd Guru** of Sikhism. Guru Angad is remembered in Sikhism for adopting and formalizing the Gurmukhi alphabet. Gurmukhi means "from the mouth of the Guru". The Gurmukhi script is now the standard writing script for Punjabi language for the Sikhs in contrast to the Punjabi language in Pakistan where now an Arabic script called 'Nastaliq' is the standard. The original Sikh scriptures and most of the historic Sikh literature have been written in the Gurmukhi script. Guru Angad began the process of collecting the hymns of Guru Nanak and contributed 62 or 63 hymns of his own. Gurmukhi was developed to be a very precise phonetic script. By learning to pronounce Gurmukhi, people could not only learn to read and pronounce the songs written by Guru Nanak; they could also learn how to pronounce the songs that Guru Nanak had preserved during his life from other masters and sages, even if those songs were in a completely different language. The purpose of Gurmukhi was not to simply represent a common language spoken by many at that time, but to allow people to read and sing sacred songs in other languages, as well.

Fortunately, after his return to India, Emperor Humayun remained committed to following his fathers 'Wasiyyat-nama' (will and secret testament) which directed him to stay the course of tolerance and harmony and build a secular empire as advised by Baba Guru Nanak. In his lifetime, Guru Nanak had promulgated a unique and universal philosophy of humanism in the Indian sub-continent and it was being

supported by the renaissance taking place in Europe in that century with scientists and philosophers challenging religious and economic concepts and beliefs. Guru Nanak had carried his message on foot far and wide to South Asia and in the Middle East. During his travels he challenged the ancient mythology, religious concepts and rituals which the people of South Asia and Middle East had been practicing for over two millenniums. People in India specifically were simply unable to express their free will in most aspects of their lives because their lives were heavily influenced by religious and political authorities. Nanak's philosophy, termed as 'Nanakian Philosophy', is embodied in his Bani (Word), which has been incorporated in the Aadh Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). It has become a means to spread his message of 'truthful living' and, his devotees are now spread across India, Assam, and Singapore and may other South East Asian countries.

However as in most religions and faith, different sects (sub-traditions within a faith) started to emerge in Sikhism immediately following Guru Nanak's death. Some believed in an alternate lineage of Gurus and others believed in the amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or schools of thought mostly leaning towards Hinduism. Each Sikh sect had a different interpretation of the Sikh scriptures and concepts that differed from the orthodox. According to Harjot Oberoi, Professor of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia, the major historic sects of Sikhism have included Udasi, Nirmala, Nanakpanthi, Khalsa, Sahajdhari, Namdhari Kuka, Nirankari and Sarvaria.

The first early Sikh sect was **Udasis**, a syncretic sect founded by **Sri Chand** – the elder son of Guru Nanak, and the **Minas Prithi Chand** – the elder son of **Guru Ram Das** (the fourth Guru) in parallel to the official succession of the Sikh Gurus. Even though this sect was an amalgamation of different religions, cultures, and schools of thought, it was mostly leaning towards Hinduism and followers regarded themselves as Hindus rather than Sikhs. Just as Hindus, the Udasis also worship the panchayatana, the five Hindu deities: Shiva, Vishnu, Durga, Ganesha, and Surya. This created a rift between Guru Nanak's followers who believe in the existence of One Eternal God and the Udasis who believed in many Hindu idols and gods.

Prithi Chand (1558 - 1618) wanted to inherit the Sikh Guruship from his father, who instead favored and appointed his youngest son the 18-year

old **Arjan Das** as the next Guru. Chand was embittered and notably started one of the major subsects of early Sikhism. This subsect came to be labelled as the **Minas,** literally "unscrupulous scoundrels", by his competition. According to historians, Prithi Chand was a Sikh rebel leader who took a "distinctly hostile view" of his brother's appointment. Modern scholars have called his movement one of the unorthodox but influential sects that emerged in the history of Sikhism.

Priti Chand was an accomplished devotional poet. He created a parallel scripture which included the hymns of earlier Gurus and his own. His spiritual discourses attracted a large following and the official support of the Mughal Empire. His followers gained control of the Sikh holy city of Amritsar and neighboring region, while Guru Hargobind – the sixth Guru of Sikhism, had to relocate his Gurushiip to the Himalayan Shivalik foothills. Chand and his followers rejected Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind as the official followers of Guru Nanak. His poetic abilities and his distribution of hymns of Guru Nanak and those of his own, likely triggered Guru Arjan to formulate and release the official first edition of the Adi Granth. There was a bitter competition between the followers of Guru Arjan and Prithi Chand for three generations. In contemporary Sikhism, the followers and movement led by Prithi Chand are considered as "dissenters". Prithi Chand established his Gurushiip in Kotha Guru (about 35 kilometers northeast of Bathinda). He died there in 1618.

In 1690's, The wars of Guru Gobind Singh against the Mughal commanders and Hindu-Hill Raja's and the rise of the militant Khalsa ultimately ended the control of Amritsar by the followers of Prithi Chand. His movement and the "Minas" sect thereafter became largely extinct.

In the middle of the 17th century, **Ram Rai** – the eldest son of **Guru Har Rai** (the seventh Guru), formed his own sect at Dehradun and his followers are called **Ram Raiyass**. He died in 1686 and later many splintered Sikh communities formed during the period between the death of **Guru Har Krishan** (8th Guru) and the coronation of **Guru Tegh Bahadur** (9th Guru). These sects have had considerable differences. Over the course of Sikh history, various other Sikh sects have emerged but without much success.

Some of these sects were financially and administratively supported by the Mughal Empire in the hopes of gaining a more favorable and compliant citizenry. In the 19th century, **Sanatan Sikhs**, **Namdharis** and **Nirankaris** sects were formed in Sikhism, seeking to reform and return to what each believed was the pure form of Sikhism. They also accepted the concept of living Gurus such as **Guru Baba Dyal Singh**. The **Nirankari** sect though unorthodox was influential in shaping the views of **Tatt Khalsa** and the contemporary era Sikh beliefs and practices.

Another sect emerged when Sikhs started associating with Bandai Khalsa (after Baba Banda Singh Bahadur). Bandai Khalsa or Bandai Sikhs, is the name given to the followers of Banda Singh Bahadur (1670 - 1716) that regarded the great military leader Banda Singh, as the Eleventh Nanak, who followed Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Guru in an unbroken line of spiritual succession. This sect originated around 1712 AD, but the majority of Sikhs opposed their view; ultimately they were expelled from the Panth by the Tatt Khalsa in 1721 AD. The Radhasoami movement in Punjab led by Baba Shiv Dya was another significant Sikh sect of the 19th century but was opposed and expelled.

As Sikh Historian, William Hewat McLeod (Emeritus Professor of History, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Author of Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion) points out that the Sikhs understand their religion as the product of five pivotal events. The first was the teaching of **Guru Nanak:** his message of liberation through meditation on the divine name. The second was the arming of the Sikhs by **Guru Hargobind**. The third was **Guru Gobind Singh's** founding of the **Khalsa**, its distinctive code to be observed by all who were initiated. At his death came the fourth event, the passing of the mystical Guru from its 10 human bearers to the **Guru Granth Sahib,** the Sikh Holy book. The final event took place early in the 20th century, when Sikhism underwent a profound reformation at the hands of the **Tatt Khalsa**. The Tatt Khalsa defines a Sikh as, "any person who believes in One God (Akal Purakh); in the ten Gurus (Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh); in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, other writings of the ten Gurus, and their teachings; in the Khalsa initiation ceremony instituted by the tenth Guru; and who does not believe in any other system of religious doctrine."

According to Baljeet Singh, a Sikh writer and a novelist; *"when the Sikh became a force in Punjab, the Hindu's became more active to keep them*

in their fold. The Hindu Brahmins in Sikh guise came forward and took control of the Sikh religion." This was done creatively by distorting facts and propagating misinformation in an era of massive illiteracy in India. Baljeet Singh further writes; *"Most of the Sikh history is written by these dubious Hindu Brahmins and their accomplices knowing fully well that Guru Nanak and all other Gurus who followed had no connection with Hinduism and had rejected almost all Hindu religious practices and rituals. Now that education is widespread, the Sikhs are noticing these distortions and are demanding corrections despite the resistance extremist Hindus".*

In their foresight, all of the 10 Gurus of Sikhism insisted that the Sikhs are a distinct community. This insistence was made so that Sikhs will not be assimilated by the caste-ridden and idolatrous Hindu way of life, which were clearly against the Gurus' egalitarian and monotheistic ideals. The Gurus knew the strength of the Brahministic sway in Indian culture and mentality. They knew that if Sikhs will not be careful and stay vigilant, there is a grave danger that the prevalent ethos of Hinduism will water down the Sikh ideals of egalitarianism and staunch monotheism-thus making it another sect of Hinduism like what happened to other egalitarian and anti-caste religious movements of India in the past. It was the spiritual genius and progressive forethought of the Gurus that made possible the survival of Sikhism as an independent world religion.

In his writings, Prof. Dalip Singh alerted the Sikhs regarding the grave threat and the consequent danger of falling into the trap of Hindu assimilation and Brahminic syncretism [Dalip Singh, Eight Divine Guru Jots (Light). Chesterfield: Missouri: Sikh Research and Educational Center, 2004; pp. 137-139].

Brahminic "Historical Myths" were used to divide Sikhs and Muslims in Mughal India

The rise of Mughal rule directly coincided with the flourishing of the spiritual teachings of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith and the subsequent nine Sikh Gurus succeeding him. The animosity between Sikh Gurus and Mughal rulers in Mughal India and the initial conflicts that transpired between them between 1606 – 1760 AD time-frame were instigated by fundamentalist bigots (both Hindus and Muslims).

The relations between the Sikhs and the Mughals first started to deteriorate during Mughal Emperor Jehangir's reign even though Emperor Jehangir was himself a moderate. Jehangir's mother, Jodhaa Akbar was a Hindu (daughter of Raja Bharmal of Amber) and he was raised in a tolerant household. His father, Emperor Akbar had even formed a new belief that did not discriminate other religions and focused on the ideas of peace, unity and tolerance. It was rumoured that each night a Brahman priest, suspended on a string cot pulled up to the window of Akbar's bedchamber, would captivate the emperor with tales of Hindu gods.

Jahangir and his son, Shahjahan maintained many of Akbar's concessions, such as the ban on cow slaughter, having only vegetarian dishes on certain days of the week, and drinking only Ganges water. Even as he was in the Punjab, 200 miles away from the Ganges, the water was sealed in large jars and transported to him. He referred to the Ganges water as the "water of immortality."

However, the Mughal courtiers of Emperor Jehangir were heavily influenced by the Muslim Caliphate of Turkey as well as the Hindu upper class and Elites and they projected Sikhism a threat to the dominance of Mughal rule and the established caste and hierarchy system in India. Their influence prevailed over the naïve Emperor Jehangir who was swayed easily. Thus the 5th Guru, Guru Arjan, was arrested under the orders of the Emperor for promoting social equality dissolving social classes and caste boundaries. Guru Arjan died in custody on May 25, 1606 at the age of 43.

Prof. Dalip Singh's research confirms that Emperor Jehangir was manipulated by his courtiers to protect the spread of Sikhism which was being adopted rapidly by those who detested castes and human inequality. Prof. Dalip Singh is an eminent academic authority on Sikh Studies and a senior researcher at Sikh Research and Education Center (SREC) based in Chesterfield, Missouri, USA. He has written six voluminous books as well as numerous scholarly articles on the history, philosophy, and theology of Sikhism. In Prof. Dalip Singh's books, he presents his historical descriptions regarding the relations between the Sikh Gurus and the Mughal rulers. Prof Singh identified what he calls "Orientalist and Brahminic historical concoctions" regarding many alleged events that transpired between the Sikh Gurus and the Mughal

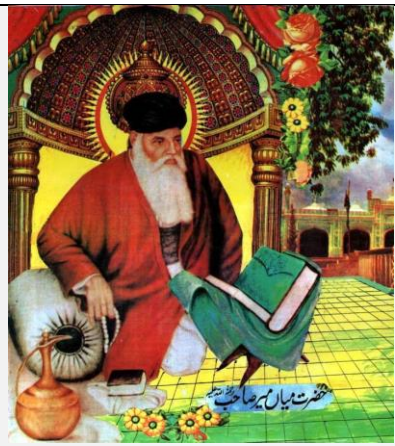
rulers [Dalip Singh, Eight Divine Guru Jots (Light)]. For example his strong denial of the popular story propagated by Brahmin historians (a story that is unfortunately believed by most Sikhs) that a Pathan mercenary under the order of Emperor Bahadur Shah martyred Guru Gobind Singh. Prof Singh utilized more than one-sixth of the total pages of his book, Life of Guru Gobind Singh to prove that the story is an "Orientalist and Brahminic concoction" intended to sow discord among Muslims and Sikhs. He analyzed the factual events surrounding the last eighty days prior to the assault of Guru Gobind Singh's life to show that the story is a total fabrication. Likewise, Prof. Dalip Singh narrates the harmonious, amicable, fraternal, and friendly relations that existed between the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah and Guru Gobind Singh [Cf. Dalip Singh, Life of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Chesterfield, Missouri: Sikh Research and Educational Center, 2002; pp. 312-336]. He showed that Guru Gobind Singh and Emperor Bahadur Shah (Prince Shah Alam before his coronation) developed close friendship right at the start of the latter's enthronement to the Mughal throne. The emperor was a well-wisher of the Guru who offered the Guru a Mughal robe of honor symbolizing imperial camaraderie and royal favor. Bahadur Shah even assured the free movement of the Guru throughout the whole breadth of Mughal territories. Furthermore, the emperor issued a firman (edict) guaranteeing the safety of the Guru and his disciples during the whole duration of his reign [Ibid., pp. 289-291, 302-304].

It appears that Wazir Khan (real name Mirza Askari), Governors of Sirhind was the mastermind of the Guru's murder. Wazir Khan sensing the Guru's closeness with the emperor had been sending hit men and spies to find opportunity to murder the Guru. Wazir Khan was afraid that the Guru—who was now a very close friend of Emperor Bahadur Shah—would settle scores with him as retaliation for the former's murder of the Guru's sons [Ibid., pp. 328-331]. According to Prof Dalip Singh, the Pathan and his assistant before they were killed in an encounter with the Sikhs, directly confessed that it was Wazir Khan who deputed them to murder Guru Gobind Singh. Emperor Bahadur Shah, who was at that time in Maharashtra—hearing of the murderous assault on the Guru's life—right away dispatched his surgeon (an Englishman named Mr. Cole) to treat the Guru's wounds. Furthermore, the emperor issued immediately a strong directive to round-up the 700 Pathans in the immediate vicinity where the crime was committed; as they may have harbored the Pathan assassin and his assistant. Guru Gobind Singh

asked the Emperor not to do so since that act would entail punishing the innocent who may not be directly or indirectly involved in the reprehensible act [Ibid., pp. 329-330].

The Mughal officers in Lahore murdered the Guru, under the instigation of Chandu, a Hindu who was jealous of the Guru's fame. The Guru's martyrdom was clearly due to the slanders and intrigues of these Hindu and Muslim fundamentalist bigots in the court of Emperor Jehangir who for pragmatic reasons to remain in power, approved of the Guru's execution. Emperor Jehangir deeply regretted his decision and made amends and eventually the Sikhs entered a period of relative peace which lasted until the Emperor Shah Jahan became ill in 1658 AD. His illness sparked a war of succession between Dara Shikoh, his eldest son and heir-apparent, and, his third son Aurangzeb.

Mir Mohammed Muayyinul Islam, (1550-1635) popularly known as Sain Mian Mir was a Muslim saint and a very close friend of the, Guru Arjun Devi (5th Guru). Mian Mir laid the foundation stone of the Harmandir Sahib, (now known as the Golden Temple) on 1st Magh, Samvat 1647 (13 January 1588 AD). Mian Mir raised slogans to mourn the martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev. He never accepted any gift sent by Emperor Jehangir, Emperor Shah Jehan, their Ministers or nobles. Mian Mir's most famous disciple was Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan.



Famous Muslim Sufi saint Mian Mir resided in Begampura, Lahore (in present-day Pakistan). He belonged to the Qadiri order of Sufism.

Dara Shikoh is widely renowned as an enlightened paragon of the harmonious coexistence and a champion of religious and cultural interaction among people of all faiths. This made him a heretic in the eyes of his orthodox younger brother Aurangzeb and a suspect eccentric in the view of many courtiers around the Mughal throne. Dara Shikoh was a follower of the Persian "perennialist" mystic Sarmad Kashani, as

well as Lahore's famous Qadiri Sufi saint Mian Mir, whom he was introduced to by Mullah Shah Badakhshi (Mian Mir's spiritual disciple and successor). Mian Mir was so widely respected among all communities that he was invited to lay the foundation stone of the Golden Temple in Amritsar by the Sikhs.

Dara Shikoh had developed a deep friendship with the seventh Sikh Guru, Guru Har Rai and this friendship cost them both dearly. Guru Har Rai supported the moderate Sufi influenced Dara Shikoh instead of conservative Sunni influenced Aurangzeb as the two brothers entered into a war of succession to the Mughal Empire throne. Guru Har Rai provided medical care to Dara Shikoh, possibly when he had been poisoned by Mughal operatives. According to Mughal records, Har Rai provided other forms of support to Dara Shikoh as well in his fight with Aurangzeb for rights to succession. Ultimately, Dara Shikoh lost in their bitter struggle to Aurangzeb for the imperial throne and he was imprisoned and executed on Aurangzeb's orders on 30 August 1659 on charges of apostasy from Islam.

The course of the history of the Indian subcontinent, had Dara Shikoh prevailed over Aurangzeb, would certainly have been very different.

In 1660, Aurangzeb summoned Guru Har Rai to appear before him to explain his relationship with Dara Shikoh. In the Sikh tradition, Guru Har Rai was asked why he was helping the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh whose forefathers had persecuted Sikhs and Sikh Gurus. Har Rai is believed to have replied that; *"if a man plucks flowers with one hand and gives it away using his other hand, both hands get the same fragrance".*

By the end of his reign, Emperor Aurangzeb had expanded his Empire and ruled over much of India. His predecessors had promoted a broadly secular state, but under his rule many of his subjects experienced intolerance and injustices. Apparently Aurangzeb had abandoned Emperor Babur's 'Wasiyyat-nama' (will and secret testament) of peaceful coexistence. Aurangzeb antagonized the Sikhs further when he had the 9th Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, imprisoned and executed in 1675 AD. After this tragic event, Mughal and Sikh relations saw their lowest point in Sikh history and this animosity was exploited by both the British as well as the Hindu Brahmin elites.

Not the Islamic Shariah but Political Pragmatism and Discriminative Policies of Mughal Bureaucracy Persecuted and Oppressed the Sikhs;

Prof. Dalip Singh narrates that notwithstanding the grave injustices perpetrated by the Mughal Padshahs (Emperors) to the Sikhs and to their Gurus; the fact remains that almost all Mughal Emperors, especially Emperor Jehangir and Emperor Aurangzeb made their decisions based on pragmatic considerations of appeasing bigoted Muslims and Hindus who constantly flattered them in their royal durbar (court). Prof. Singh argues that Aurangzeb's decisions were not specifically dictated by his commitment to Islamic Sunni orthodoxy; rather they were largely dictated by political pragmatism. He pointed out that during the time of Guru Harkrishan, the Sikh masands (feudal overlords) and the rival claimant to guruship, Ram Raie should be equally pointed out as among those who greatly persecuted Guru Harkrishan and caused him much distress. They were the ones who presented their case to Emperor Aurangzeb and instigated the emperor to persecute Guru Harkrishan. The Sikh masands further appealed to the emperor to make Ram Raie the Guru instead of Harkrishan. In short, Emperor Aurangzeb's commitment to orthodox Sunni Islam did not have anything to do with his decision to imprison by house arrest Guru Harkrishan; rather it was Aurangzeb's political and pragmatic move to please and to win-over to his side the rebellious Sikh masands and the rival claimant to the guruship, Ram Raie.

Prof. Dalip Singh brings home two very important points in his analysis of Sikh-Muslim relations in that era. Firstly, the conflicts between the Sikh Gurus and the Mughal emperors were brought about by the Mughal's elitist and discriminatory policies towards all non-Muslims. Secondly, the caste-oriented Brahmins who detested Sikhism's egalitarian ideology, and who were firmly opposed to Sikhism's cutting criticisms of Hindu idolatry, ritualism, and casteism, fanned the Mughal emperor's conflict with the Sikh Gurus [Eight Divine Guru Jots (Light), op.cit. pp. 16-24].

Prof. Singh also highlights the part played by obscurantist, casteist, divisive and communalist Brahmins in fomenting conflicts between Sikhs and Muslims. He identified the role of Brahminic machinations in creating divisions between these two egalitarian religions. Unfortunately, most Sikh histories fail to show the Brahminic instigations in the Sikh-Muslim conflicts. Prof. Singh emphasizes that

most of the troubles that were experienced by the Gurus were not only due to the oppression of the Mughal Padshahs (Emperors) but also due to the plots of upper caste Hindus who were fearful of the teachings of the Guru Nanak against casteism. These Brahmins frequently slandered the Sikh Gurus before the Mughal authorities.

Prof. Singh enumerated many examples of Brahmin machinations against the Gurus. The immediate successor of Nanak, Guru Angad, suffered from the disruptive plots of Brahmins who wanted him removed from the "guruship" for his spirited campaign against the Hindu caste system. Hindu Brahmins aggressively supported the Udassi sect of Guru Nanak's ascetic son, **Sri Chand** in order to create division among the Sikhs at the crucial time when the infant Sikh community suffered bereavement during the demise of Guru Nanak. Similarly, a yogi-ascetic by the name of Shiv Nath Tapa, in collusion with local Brahmins, jealous of the rising popularity of Guru Angad among the masses; and envious of the general acceptance among the ordinary people of the Guru's institution of casteless dining (Guru ka langar), vehemently endeavored to remove Guru Angad from preaching his doctrine of pristine monotheism and social egalitarianism in the town of Khadur and other outskirt areas. Likewise, Chandu, the person who is responsible for the martyrdom of the fifth Guru Arjan; Pandit Krishan Lal who vehemently opposed the preaching of the eighth Guru Harkrishan; the upper-class Brahmins and hill-chieftains (Pahari Rajas)- These are not Muslims but these are all Hindus who intensely opposed the Sikh Gurus and caused them much suffering (See also, Life of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, op.cit. pp. 166-177 and Eight Guru Jots (Light), op.cit., pp. 307-320].

After Guru Tegh Bahadur's death, his son Guru Gobind Singh was formally installed as the leader of the Sikhs at age nine. Gobind Singh, became the 10th Guru.

This was a time when the rulers and the masses were deeply divided and the masses were suffering from administrative, religious, social and economic injustices. The rulers, the large landowners (Jagirdars) and the clergy, were in collusion with each other. They were all exploiting religion and abusing their own power and position for selfish ends. The cruelty inflicted by caste divisions and the superstitious practices used as tools for exploitation by the priestly class, was no less than that

inflicted by the sword of the tyrannical rulers and merciless invaders. It needs to be mentioned that some of the greatest injustices were inflicted by the administrators at the time. For example, Chandu Diwan (Minister in Lahore court) played a role in the martyrdom (Shahidi) of Guru Arjan Dev Ji as he was afraid that Guru Nanak's first rebellion, which was against the cruelty of the caste system would surface and "lowliest of the low" would demand equality if Guru Nanak's message prevailed.

Under Guru Gobind Singh, Guru Nanak's universal movement of equality and his call to the people to "fear none, frighten none" culminated in the formation of a complete spiritual and temporal system. This system interpreted and defended the human values taught in Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh holy book) by sages of many religions - in a sense the parliament of faiths. The common values which this movement promoted and defended were, respect for diversity and for all paths leading to the One Creator Being, and equality of all before the One Creator (e.g. Aadm ki jaat sabhe ekay pehchaanbo - Recognize all human race as one … Guru Gobind Singh).

Panth Khalsa (Order of the Pure Ones)

Guru Gobind Singh organized the Sikhs as a spiritual-military collective called the 'Khalsa' to make sure they would always be ready to defend their faith as well as faiths and lives of others who are suppressed. This started what would become a long line of highly coveted warriors. The 'Panth Khalsa' (Order of the Pure Ones) tradition was formed in 1699 AD and the Vaisakhi day (or Baisakhi) festival (typically 14 April) celebrates the birth of this tradition each year. Guru Gobind Singh assembled his Sikhs and baptized five beloved (Panj Pyare) who were brave and obedient to his orders and called this brotherhood – 'The Khalsa'. These five saints - soldiers were devoted to all of mankind. On Vaisakhi day, he also gave his Sikhs five symbols and a distinctive clothing and headwear so that they were easily recognized. The five Symbols or 'K's are:

1. Kesh (uncut hair),
2. Kangha (a wooden comb for the hair),
3. Kara (an iron bracelet – a symbol of being faithful),
4. Kachera (100% cotton tie able undergarment as a symbol of simplicity),
5. Kirpan (an iron dagger large enough to defend oneself).

The new brotherhood had no distinctions of caste, creed, color or sex. The women were given equal status with men and advised to add "KAUR" (Princess) to their names and were to be always protected. The men were given a new surname "SINGH" (Lion) to be added to their first names.

Flowing from these ideals was also the concept of community service (seva) and sharing. "Guru ka Langar" or community kitchen where all are served without discrimination became a popular Khalsa institution - as powerful as the sword to resist and overcome the social and political injustice (therefore, "Degh Teg Fateh").

FALL OF THE MUGHALS AND RISE OF THE KHALSA

The years 1707 through the late 1799 was an exceptionally difficult period for the Sikh followers. By this time, the Mughal court, that earlier had lost direction under the deep influence and misguidance of the Hindu Upper class and Muslim extremist clergy had pretty much exhausted its resources and energy fighting ill-advised battles against the newly formed Sikh Khalsa. The list of treacherous conspirators like Gangu the Brahmin, and others who conspired in the death of the young Sahibzadas (Princes) of Guru Gobind Singh must not be forgotten by history as the people who sowed the seeds of conflict between the Mughals fighting to keep their empire and the Sikh Khalsa, fighting for the rights of ordinary people.

Even at that time there were many Islamic supporters of Guru Nanak's universal teachings and mission of equality and justice who openly sided with the Sikh Khalsa against the misguided rulers. The roots of communal harmony in the area date back many years. Thousands of Muslim warriors served with the Khalsa under Guru Gobind Singh in the battles against the Mughals. Others like Pir Budhu Shah came to Guru Gobind Singh's aid with his 700 disciples at a most critical time when he was under attack from the Hindu Hill Rajas at Bhangani (near Paonta Sahib) where his two sons were killed in the battle. When the Mughal army attacked the fortress of Chamkaur Sahib, Guru Gobind Singh was saved by two of his Muslim Pashtun devotees, Gani Khan and Nabi Khan who gave shelter to Guru Gobind Singh in the forests of Machhiwara when he was being pursued by the Mughal army.

Then in Dec. 1704, when Sahibzada Fateh Singh and Sahibzada Zorawar Singh, 9- and 7-year-old sons of Guru Gobind Singh, were ordered to be murdered by the governor of Sirhind, Wazir Khan (Mirza Askari). Wazir Khan’s close relative, Nawab Sher Mohammed Khan, Nawab of Malerkotla, lodged a vehement protest against this inhuman act and said it was against Islam and humanity. Wazir Khan nevertheless had the Sahibzadas killed and the Nawab of Malerkotla stormed out of the court in protest. Later he became very close friend of Guru Gobind Singh and married a lady of Guru Gobind Singh's family, hence all the succeeding Nawabs of Malerkotla descend in the female line from Guru Hargobind Singh.

Note: Wazir Khan (real name Mirza Askari), Governor of Sirhind is not to be confused with Wazir Khan (real name Hakim Shaikh Ilam-ud-din Ansari), the physician of Emperor Shahjahan. There is no relation between the two. Wazir Khan (Hakim Ansari) was a native of Chiniot, whose family migrated to Lahore and who rose to be one of the court physicians to the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in Lahore, and was in due course, over a long lifetime of service, made a Mughal noble. He remained Chief Qadi at Lahore for some time. The Wazir Khan Mosque (Masjid Wazir Khan) is 17th century mosque located in the city of Lahore, Pakistani. The mosque was commissioned during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan as part of an ensemble of buildings that also included the nearby Shahi Hammam baths. Construction of Wazir Khan Mosque began in 1634 C.E., and was completed in 1641.

It wasn't until after that battle of Battle of Chamkaur that better sense also prevailed over Emperor Aurangzeb and he became remorseful over the blunders of his reign. The highlight of this was when he received a spiritual victory letter from Guru Gobind Singh in 1705. The letter is written in Persian verse. Guru Gobind Singh sent Bhai Daya Singh to Ahmednagar to give the letter, called 'Zafarname' to Emperor Aurangzeb. *(It is said that a copy of the letter, written by Guru Gobind Singh, was found with the Mahant of Patna Sahib in 1890 and another copy with Babu Jagan Nath; this copy was mysteriously misplaced).*

Bhai Daya Singh handed over the Zafarname to the Emperor on 5th of January 1705 (which was last day of Ramdaan that year). The Emperor read the letter from Guru Gobind Singh and after reading it was convinced wholeheartedly that indeed the Guru was highly spiritual, truthful, and a fearless warrior. Emperor Aurangzeb, now nearly 91 years of age, was so moved after reading the letter that his body started to tremble with feelings of remorse and regret of what he had done in his life time.

The **'Zafarnama'** had an extremely demoralizing effect on Emperor Aurangzeb as he saw his old age overcoming his ambitions and the end looming over the horizon. He saw in Guru Gobind Singh his hope – as someone who could show him the right path in truth before he died. Aurangzeb wanted redemption as he had wronged the Guru. He now knew the Guru to be a man fighting for the rights of poor and

underprivileged and wanted to meet the Guru in person, to seek his own redemption. The Emperor was horrified by the contradictions of his own faith, Islam and his own deeds, which contradicted Islam. He assured Bhai Daya Singh that he would make amends and extended an invitation to the Guru to meet him in person in the Deccan. Bhai Daya Singh suggested that a written response to the letter would be more appropriate to extend an invitation to Guru Gobind Singh. The Emperor agreed and he wrote a letter back to the Guru, stating his inability to come to the north and requesting the Guru to meet him in Ahmadnagar at his earliest convenience. He sent two messengers with Bhai Dhaya with his letter to the Guru extending the invitation. The return journey of 900 miles lasted three months. Aurangzeb also issued instructions to his Governors to withdraw all orders against the Guru. He instructed his minister, Munim Khan, to make arrangements for the safe passage of the Guru when he came to meet. Upon receiving the Emperor's letter, Guru Gobind Singh felt that Aurangzeb's invitation was extended with due humility from the Emperor's heart and concluded the time was right to accept his peace offering it in view of the Emperor's old age, without compromising on his oath to mete out justice to anyone who resorted to acts of barbarity.

Alas, the historic meeting – a meeting that could have changed the fate of India was not in God's plan. Unfortunately, by the time the Guru Gobind Singh entered Rajasthan, news came of the Emperor's death at Aurangabad on March 3, 1707. With this also ended the only hope for uniting the people against the British colonists and defending them from the evil designs of the power hungry future rulers who fought for the throne, thrived on people's misery and were willing to pay any price to continue conflict in lieu of peace. Emperor Aurangzeb had made peace with himself and Guru Gobind Singh and in his last days, the Emperor' wrote the following letter to his sons in which he states:

"I do not know who I am, where I am, where I am to go and what will happen to a sinful person like me. Many like me have passed away, wasting their lives. Allah was in my heart but my blind eyes failed to see him. I do not know how I will be received in Allah's court. I do not have any hope for my future: I have committed many sins and do not know what punishments will be awarded to me in return."

The Emperor's last will was recorded by Maulvi Hamid-ud Din in chapter

8 of his hand-written Persian book on the life of Emperor Aurangzeb. Some portion of Emperor Aurangzeb's last is stated below;

"There is no doubt that I have been the emperor of India and I have ruled over this country. But I am sorry to say that I have not been able to do a good deed in my lifetime. My inner soul is cursing me as a sinner. But I know it is of no avail".

After Aurangzeb's death, Bahadur Shah I was crowned on 19 June 1707. He was to be the first and the last of the later Mughal rulers to exercise real authority. Earlier In 1695, Aurangzeb had sent him to the Punjab region to fight the chieftains and subdue a rebellion by the Sikh Guru Gobind Singh. Although as commander he imposed "heavy taxation" on the defeated Rajas, he thought it necessary to leave the Sikhs undisturbed in their fortified city of Anandpur and refused to wage war against them out of "genuine respect" for their faith. Once he became emperor, he tried to reverse some of the narrow-minded policies and measures adopted by his father, Emperor Aurangzeb, adhering to his fathers' last will and letter to the spirit. He followed a conciliatory policy towards the Rajput's and Marathas and even befriended Guru Gobind Singh. Unfortunately on October 7, 1708, Guru Gobind Singh died from wounds inflicted by Pathan Assassins sent by Wazir Khan (real name Mirza Askari), the Governor of Sirhind who disobeyed orders of Bahadur Shah. Wazir Khan of Sirhind cunningly placed the blame on Bahadur Shah and this started a rebellion led by Banda Singh Bahadur against the Mughals once again. Banda Singh Bahadur was able to capture the coward and scoundrel Wazir Khan in Sirhind city in the Battle of Chappar Chiri in May of 1710 and execute him in revenge for the deaths of Guru Gobind Singh's sons and Pir Budhu Shah after the Sikh victory at Sirhind.

In Feb. 1712, Bahadur Shah died at age 68 and with this the Mughals lost their ability to tax or effectively govern most of the Indian subcontinent. In the northwestern region, particularly the Punjab, Banda Singh led a successful campaign against the successive weakened Mughals for several years, establishing the foundation pillars of the future Sikh rule in Punjab. Banda Singh was captured by Mughal Emperor Farrukhsiyar (grandson of Bahadur Shah I) and executed in Delhi in 1716 AD.

After Banda Singh Bahudur's death, the persecution of the Mughal Empire in the Punjab region forced some Sikhs to seek a refuge among the recesses of the hills or in the woods to the south of the Sutlej. The Sikhs went into hiding during this period. From 1718 to 1738, the Sikhs carried out a guerrilla war against the oppressive Mughal Subedars and the Hindu Hill Raja's in the area around the Sivalik Hills. With their hit-and-run tactics, the Sikh warriors caused devastation to both. Historian Joseph D. Cunningham writes of the period: "The Sikhs were scarcely again heard of in history for the period of a generation". Throughout that period, the well-disciplined and highly trained Sikh fighters were at war but were keeping a low profile. In Ajmer, Ajit Singh carved out a vast territory and allied himself with the renegade Marathas. While in the Deccan the Marathas had ruined Mughal fortifications and were already on the warpath. All this greatly contributed to the eventual decline of the Mughal Empire. In 1737, the Marathas under Baji Rao I annexed Gujarat, Malwa and Bundelkhand, and raided the Mughal capital Delhi.

Nader Shah Afshar, the Persian Emperor (Shah of Iran) saw the turmoil in India as an opportunity. His eyes turned upon the wealthy but weakened Mughal Empire. In 1739, he invaded India and crushed the Mughal army in less than three hours at the huge Battle of Karnal on 13 February 1739. After this spectacular victory, Nader Shah captured the Mughal Emperor, Mohammad Shah, the grandson of Bahadur Shah and entered Delhi. Zakariya Khan Bahadur (who was the Mughal Empire's viceroy of Lahore under Muhammad Shah from 1726 onwards) was spared and left in charge of Lahore by Nader Shah in return for annual tribute payments to the Persian crown. This event weakened the Mughals significantly. Once the Mughals were completely looted of their wealth, rebellions and disloyalty became commonplace, paving the path for more invaders and eventually the British East India Company.

Zakariya Khan extended the misguided policies initiated earlier of the scoundrel and traitor, Wazir Khan of Sirhind against the Sikhs, and thousands of Sikhs were killed during his period especially during the Sikh holocaust of 1745-1746 (also called Chhota Ghallughara in Punjabi for "Smaller Massacre"). Once again, the inept Mughals were playing into the hands of the cunning Hindu elites such Lakhpat Rai, a Hindu Khatri from Kalanpur and the Diwan of Lahore who led this massacre. The Sikh inhabitants of Lahore were first rounded up by Lakhpat Rai,

then executed on 10 March 1746. Lakhpat Rai went on to order Sikh places of worship destroyed and their scriptures burnt. He went so far as to decree that anyone uttering the word "Guru" be put to death and even saying the Punjabi language word for sugar, "gur", which sounded like "Guru", could be cause for the death penalty. During this period, Mahant Akil Das of Jandialla (also known as Haribhagat Niranjania) and the head of the Handali sect of Jandiala in Amritsar district of the Punjab, orchestrated Bhai Taru Singh's Shahidi. Taru Singh was a hard working saintly farmer from Poolha, Distt. Kasur, who ran a daily "Langar" for all. History records that the local poor and suppressed Muslims mourned the arrest, torture and death of Bhai Taru Singh.

In 1748, Mir Mannu (Mu'in ul-Mulk) became governor of Lahore and the surrounding provinces through his exploits in battle against the Afghan army. Barbarity of Mir Mannu is unprecedented as he led a mass genocide of Sikhs under his very tyrannical and oppressive regime. Mir Mannu, used his absolute power to wreak havoc on the ordinary people. Such was the cruelty inflicted by Mannu that his name passed into folklore, *'Mannu is our sickle and we are his grass blades; as he cuts us, we grow many times more'.*

That same year, in 1748, Ahmad Shah Durrani (Abdali) of the Durrani clan invaded the Mughal Empire. He subsequently raided India eight more times. In March 1752, Mir Mannu surrendered Lahore to Ahmad Shah Abdali. Mir Mannu died one year later. Punjab, which was now in complete chaos and subjected to frequent raids had no civil government and the people were at the mercy of armed bandits and looters – there was simply no respite for the people. It was during this period that the 'Rakhi system' or protectorates under which people paid money to mercenary bands became common. In this power vacuum, with support from all oppressed Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, the Khalsa 'jathas' (groups), formed which later grew into larger misls, gaining in strength.

In 1762, Ahmed Shah Abdali invaded India again and plundered Punjab treasury, destroyed Harimandir Sahib (Golden Temple) and massacred thousands of Sikhs. In Sikh history, this massacre is called the ‘Vadda Ghallughara’, the greater massacre. Before leaving for Iran, Ahmed Shah Abadali appointed a Hindu, Kabuli Mal, as the Subedar or Governor of Lahore. Kabuli Mal had aided Ahmad Shah by betraying the Sikhs. This ignoble Hindu Governor further appointed Massa Rangar as the

administrator of Harimandir Sahib who sacrileged the holy shrine by smoking and drinking intoxicants there. Kabuli Mal and Massa Rangar both eventually paid with their lives for this desecration.

The resolve of all ordinary people against these tyrannical regimes and ‘Turk invaders’ whose only aim was to loot and plunder became stronger. In Sikh writings the word 'Turk Invader' was not directed towards any religion but for "foreign invaders" from the north in particular Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali. Some biased historians misleadingly interpret the popular uprising and struggle for freedom from tyranny and oppression by the people as some sort of religious conflict between the Hindus (led by the Khalsa) and the Muslims. This Anglo-Hindu narrative is absurd since all historical evidence, when added to the unique Khalsa ideology of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh’s vision points to all ordinary people, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, fighting off the invaders and tyranny under the brave leadership of Khalsa. Regardless of religion, all suffered from the excesses and greed of a cruel regime. The sword arm which inflicted cruelty may have been Mughal, Durrani, Afghani or Hindu Hill Rajas and Divans like Lakhpat Rai, who were supported by Brahmanical opposition to the liberating ideology of Guru Nanak Dev. Ordinary people were being crushed between the inept Delhi rulers of the remnants of the Mughals and the invaders from the North-West who descended periodically to purely loot and plunder India’s treasures.

Henceforth, the Khalsa, now backed by popular support, spearheaded the struggle to establish a rule of the people, by the people, in which all were equal partners. Guru Nanak's mission was clarified as the establishment of, "a regime in which no one inflicted pain on another as the Will of the Benevolent Lord." (Guru Arjan Dev Ji).

By 1764, the northwestern parts of the Indian subcontinent (now Pakistan and parts of north India) were a collection of fourteen small warring regions. Of the fourteen, twelve were Sikh-controlled misls. Of the remaining two, one named Kasur (near Lahore) was Muslim controlled, and one in the southeast was led by an Englishman named George Thomas. This region constituted the fertile and productive valleys of the five rivers - Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Bias and Sutlej. The Sikh misls were all under the control of the Khalsa fraternity of Sikh warriors, but they were unfortunately not united and frequently fought with each

other over revenue collection, disagreements, and local priorities; however, in the event of external invasion such as from the armies of Ahmed Shah Abdali from Afghanistan, they would usually unite.

The misl chiefs, despite occasionally fighting among themselves, assembled at Amritsar in 1764 and pronounced sovereignty of the Khalsa Raj. They struck a new coin with the inscription "Degh, Tegh, Fateh," in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh. The chiefs also decided to hold "Sarbat Khalsa" (Congregation) once a year at Amritsar to resolve their differences through Guru Mata or Gurmata (meaning 'Guru's intentions'- an order that is binding on all Sikhs). Their concerted efforts and relentless war against the Mughals and their agents ultimately paved the way for the Sikh empire to be established by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1799. Initially, the Sikh misls' only appointed their own 'Zamindars' (Landlords) in areas under their control, replacing the previous Muslim revenue collectors, which provided resources to feed and strengthen the warriors aligned with Sikh interests. Also by this time, a new threat. i.e. European colonial traders and the East India Company appeared on the scene as they had expanded their operations in India on both its eastern and western coasts.

Sikh Confederacy between (1707–1799)
In order to withstand the persecution of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (5th Mughal Emperor), and subsequent Mughal rulers beginning in 1655 AD, several of the later Sikh Gurus established military forces to fight the Mughal Empire and Hindu Hill Chiefs (Pahari-Rajas of Himachal). Banda Singh Bahadur continued Sikh resistance to the Mughal Empire until his defeat at the Battle of Gurdas Nangal. For several years, Sikhs found refuge in the jungles and the Himalayan foothills until they organized themselves into military bands known as 'Jathas' which later became 'misls'. The term 'misl' literally means "equal", also "an example" derived from a Perso-Arabic term meaning "similar", headed by Misldars. In Sikh history it generally refers to the sovereign states of the Sikh Confederacy, that rose during the early 18th century in the Punjab region from the 'Jathas' after the Mughal Empire started its steep decline in 1716 AD.

The period from 1716 to 1799 was a highly turbulent time politically and militarily in the Punjab region for all inhabitants of Punjab, regardless of religion. The Khalsa fighters organized themselves as

‘Dal Khalsa’, meaning "Khalsa army" or "Khalsa party" in the late 18th century, after defeating several invasions by the Afghan rulers of the Durrani Empire and their allies, remnants of the Mughals and their administrators and the Mughal-allied Hindu Hill-Rajas of the Sivalik Hills. The Sikhs of the Dal Khalsa eventually formed their own independent Sikh administrative regions called misls.

The misls formed a commonwealth that was described by Antoine Polier as an "aristocratic republic". The ‘Sikh Confederacy’ is a description of the political structure, of how all the Barons' Kingdoms interacted with each other politically together in Punjab. Although the misls were unequal in strength, and each misl attempted to expand its territory and access to resources at the expense of others, they acted in unison in relation to other non-Sikh states. The misls held biannual meetings of their legislature, the Sarbat Khalsa in Amritsar.

‘Sarbat Khalsa’ literally translates to the "entire Sikh Nation". The first Sarbat Khalsa was called by the 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh before his death in 1708 and the tradition of calling Sarbat Khalsa has continued ever since at times of hardship or conflict. The next known meeting of the Sarbat Khalsa took place on the occasion of Divali in 1723 when a clash between Tat Khalsa and the Bandais (followers of Banda Singh Bahadur) was averted and amicably settled through the intervention and wise counsel of Bhai Mani Singh.

In 1733, the Mughal government decided, at the insistence of Zakariya Khan, Mughal governor of Sirhind, to revoke all repressive measures issued against the Sikhs and made an offer of a land grant with a royalty title to them. The grant was of a Jagir consisting of the three parganas of Dipalpur, Kanganval and Jhabal and the title of ‘Nawab’ conferred upon their leader. At the Sarbat Khalsa of 1733, the Sikhs accepted the offer. **Kapur Singh** was unanimously elected as the leader and chosen for the title. He was reluctant, but could not deny the unanimous will of the Sikh community. Before putting on the robe of honour ('Siropa') sent by the Mughals, as a mark of respect, he placed the robe at the feet of Baba Deep Singh, Bhai Karam Singh and Bhai Buddh Singh (great-great-grandfather of Maharaja Ranjit Singh).

Rise of the Misls

Nawab Kapur Singh combined the various Sikh militias into two groups; the **Taruna Dal** and the **Budda Dal (**the veteran group), which would collectively be known as the Dal Khalsa. Sikh militias over 40 years of age would be part of the Budda Dal and Sikh militas under 40 years were part of the Taruna Dal. The purpose of the Budda Dal, was to protect Gurdwaras and train the Taruna Dal, while the Taruna Dal would act as combat troops. The Taruna Dal was further divided in five jathas (groups), each with 1300 to 2000 men and a separate drum and banner, thus forming the nucleus of a separate political state. **Sardar Hari Singh Dhillon** was given command of the Taruna Dal. Under Hari Singh's leadership, the Taruna Dal rapidly grew in strength and soon numbered more than 12,000. The territories conquered by these groups were entered in their respective papers at the Akal Takht ('Throne of the timeless one') in Amritsar. From these documents or misls, the principalities carved out by them came to be known as 'misls'. The area of operations of each Dal, or army, was Hari ke Pattan, where the Sutlej river and Beas River meet; the Taruna Dal (the young fighters) would control the area east of Hari ke Pattan while the Budha Dal (the elder trainers and mentors) would control the area west of it.

After Nawab Kapur Singh, the command of Dal Khalsa was given to the Misldar of the Ahluwalia Misl, **Sultan Jassa Singh Ahluwalia** in 1748. He was an able and powerful administrator and made the foundation of Khalsa strong for future generations to lead. Other prominent leaders of the Misls were Baba Deep Singh (1682–1757) who is revered among Sikhs as one of the most brave martyrs in Sikhism and as a highly religious person.

Under a gurmata of the Sarbat Khalsa on 14 October 1745, the active fighting force of the Sikhs was reorganized into 25 jathas (bands) of about 100 each. A further reorganization into 11 misls (divisions) forming the Dal Khalsa was made by the Sarbat Khalsa on Baisakhi, 29 March 1748. Thus, Sarbat Khalsa became the central body of what J.D. Cunningham, in his book, A History of the Sikhs, terms a "theocratic confederate feudalism" established by the misls. Although misls varied in strength, the use of primarily light cavalry (horsemen) with a smaller amount of heavy cavalry was uniform throughout all of the Sikh misls. Cavalrymen in a misl were required

to supply their own horses and equipment. A standard cavalryman was armed with a spear, matchlock, and scimitar. How the armies of the Sikh misls received payment varied with the leadership of each misl. The most prevalent system of payment was the 'Fasalandari' system; soldiers would receive payment every six months at the end of a harvest. In battle, 'The Running Skirmish' was a tactic unique to the Sikh cavalrymen which was notable for its effectiveness and the high degree of skill required to execute it. George Thomas and George Forster, contemporary writers who witnessed it described its use separately in their accounts of the military of the Sikhs. George Forster noted: *"A party from forty to fifty, advance in a quick pace to a distance of carbine shot from the enemy and then, that the fire may be given with the greatest certainty, the horses are drawn up and their pieces discharged, when speedily, retiring about a 100 paces, they load and repeat the same mode of annoying the enemy. Their horses have been so expertly trained to a performance of this operation that on receiving a stroke of hand, they stop from a full canter."*

The 12 main Sikh misls by 1780 AD had a total strength of approx. 94,000 highly trained and disciplined Horsemen;

Misl Name	**Capital**	**# of Horsemen**
Phulkian Misl	Patiala, Nabha, Jind	5,000
Ahluwalia Misl	Kapurthala	10,000
Bhangi Misl	Amritsar	10,000
Kanhaiya Misl	Sohian	8,000
Ramgarhia Misl	Sri Hargobindpur	5,000
Singhpuria Misl	Jalandhar	5,000
Singh Krora Misl	Shamchaurasi, Hariana, etc.	10,000
Nishanvale Misl	Ambala, Shahbad Markanda	2,000
Sukerchakia Misl	Gujranwala	15,000
Dallewalia Misl	Rahon	12,000
Nakai Misl	Chunian	7,000
Shaheedan Misl	Shahzadpur	5,000
Strength in Regular Horsemen (in 1780 AD)		**94,000**

The two main divisions in the territory between the misls were between those who were in the Malwa region and those who were in

the Majha region. While eleven of the misls were north of the Sutlej river, one, the Phulkian misl was south of the Sutlej. The Sikhs north of the Sutlej river were known as the Majha Sikhs while the Sikhs that lived south of the Sutlej river were known as the Malwa Sikhs. In the smaller territories were the Dhanigeb Singhs in the Sind Sagar Doab, the Gujrat Singhs in the Jech Doab, the Dharpi Singhs in the Rechna Doab, and the Doaba Singhs in the Jalandhar Doab.

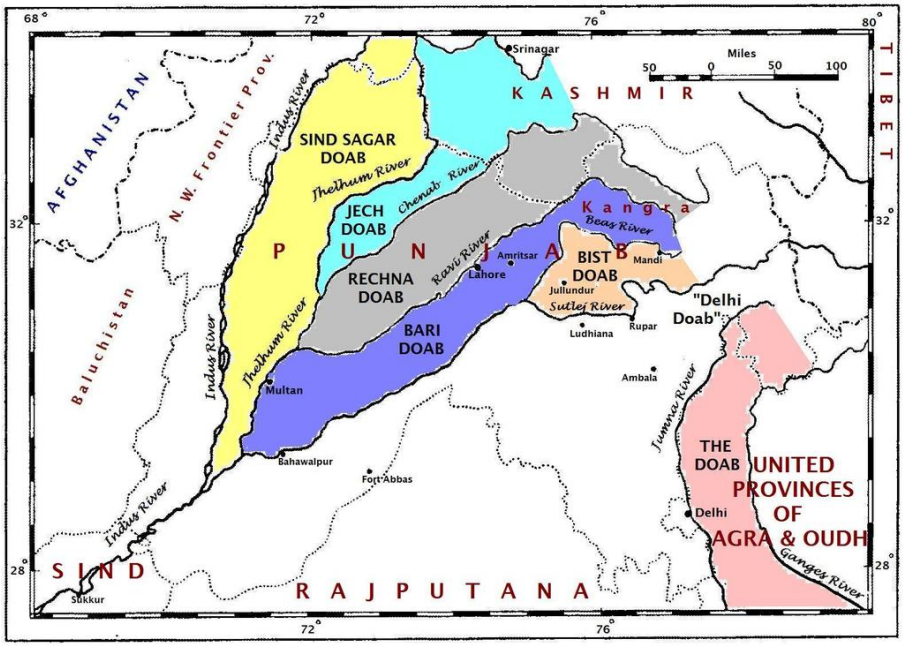
Towards the end of 18th century, the five most powerful misls were those of **Sukkarchakkia, Kanhayia, Nakkais, Ahluwalias** and **Bhangi Sikhs**.

Among the smaller Sikh misls, some such as the Phulkias misl had switched loyalties in the late 18th century and supported the Afghan army invasion against their Khalsa brethren. The Kasur region which was ruled by a Muslim Misaldar, always supported the Afghan invasion forces from the North-West and joined them in their plundering.

Rangit Singh's rise to fame and early conquests

Ranjit Singh belonged to the Sukkarchakkia misl, and through marriage had a reliable alliance with Kanhayia and Nakkais, giving him 1/3rd of the total strength of the Sikh Confederacy. Ranjit Singh's fame grew when he was only 17 years old in 1797 AD, when the Afghan ruler Shah Zaman, of the Ahmad Shah Abdali dynasty, attempted to annex Punjab region into his control through his general Shahanchi Khan and 12,000 soldiers. The battle was fought in the territory that fell in Ranjit Singh controlled misl, whose regional knowledge and warrior expertise helped resist the invading army. This victory gained him recognition. In 1798,

the Afghan ruler sent in another army, which Ranjit Singh did not resist. He let them enter Lahore, then encircled them with his army, blocked off all food and supplies and burnt all crops and food sources that could have supported the Afghan army. Much of the Afghan army retreated back to Afghanistan after this defeat.



In 1799, Raja Ranjit Singh's army of 25,000 Khalsa, supported by another 25,000 Khalsa led by his mother-in-law Rani Sada Kaur of Kanhaiya misl, in a joint operation attacked the region controlled by Bhangi Sikhs loyal to the Afghan ruler, Zaman Shah Durrani centered around Lahore. The Bhangi Sikh rulers escaped, marking Lahore as the first major conquest of Ranjit Singh.

Both the Muslim and Hindu population of Lahore welcomed the rule of Ranjit Singh. In 1800, the ruler of Jammu region ceded control of his region to Ranjit Singh. On April 12, 1801 (to coincide with Vaisakhi), Ranjit Singh proclaimed himself as the "Maharaja of Punjab", and agreed to a formal investiture ceremony, which was carried out by Baba Sahib Singh Bedi – a direct descendant of Guru Nanak through his younger son, Lakhmi Das (Chand).

On the day of his coronation, prayers were performed across Mosques, Temples and Gurdwaras in his territories for his long life.

Ranjit Singh called his rule as "Sarkar Khalsa", and his court as "Darbar Khalsa". He ordered new coins to be issued in the name of Guru Nanak named the "NanakShahi" ("of the Emperor Nanak"). Maharaja Ranjit Singh had formed one of the most formidable fighting force in history. He had raised a very powerful and cosmopolitan army. According to Mandeep Rai, a former bureaucrat and historian; “He [Ranjit Singh] had Muslim gunners who never fled the battlefield. Then there were Gurkhas, Sikhs and Hindus. It was a most cosmopolitan army of the brave”.

Thousands of Muslim warriors served with the Khalsa in many battles from Guru Gobind Singh to Maharaja Ranjit Singh - the latter's artillery was almost entirely in the hands of Muslim generals. Even earlier in the 17th century, Banda Singh Bahadur (1670 –1716), a Sikh warrior and a military commander of Khalsa army had 5,000 Muslim soldiers in his army (from Gurmukh Singh (U.K.), based on well publicized Panjabi and English sources).

With subsequent and progressive expulsion of Afghans from the Punjab followed by defeating them in the Afghan-Sikh Wars, and the unification

of the separate Sikh misls, Rangit Singh created a unified political state leading to a formidable Sikh Empire. Maharaja Ranjit Singh reclaimed all the Sikh holy places and land and put them under the protection of Sikhs. After the defeat of Nawab Muzzafar Khan and capture of Multan in June of 1818 AD, Ranjit Singh came to Talwandi in Sept. of 1818 and reclaimed all the land from usurpers and squatters that had been gifted to Guru Nanak by Rai Bular. He then formalized the management of that land and assets under a trust managed by the Gurdwara Janamashtan. The Gurdwara too was repaired and rebuilt by Ranjit Singh around 1819.

'Nanakshahi', the currency of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Ranjit Singh's reign in Punjab introduced numerous reforms, modernization, investment into infrastructure and general prosperity. His Khalsa army and government included Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and Europeans. His legacy includes a period of Sikh cultural and artistic renaissance of Punjabi Culture and Language. His currency 'Nanakshahi' held a strong position against the British and the French currencies in commerce and trade. For his bravery, honesty and fairness, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was popularly known as Sher-e-Punjab, or "Lion of Punjab".

Decline of the Sikh Empire

Rangit Singh made his empire and the Sikhs a strong political force, for which he is deeply admired and revered in Sikhism. However, his era also marked a general decline in religious and moral fervor towards a life of alcoholism and licentiousness, along with a demoralization of the Sikh court and nobility. Many Sikh historians point to Ranjit Singh for the beginning of the decline of Sikhism - who could neither understand the philosophy enunciated by Guru Gobind Singh nor did he follow the concept of Miri Piri defined by Guru Hargobind. Instead, he followed the imperial life style of the Mughal emperors and indulged in extravagance and loose morality. In this way they say he neglected the Sikh tenets

and allowed evils and vices to be crept in the religion – vices that Guru Nanak was strictly against. The most extreme example of this was that instead of paying obeisance to Harimandir Sahib (Golden Temple) and bathing in the Sarovar there regularly, Ranjit Singh paid visits to Haridwar and bathed in the Ganga River. When he died on June 27, 1839, some of his wives even committed 'Satti', a practice that was extremely repugnant to Sikh faith. Even though his reign was known for fairness and justice, unfortunately, the Sikh Empire did not last for very long because Ranjit Singh failed to establish a lasting structure for Sikh government or stable succession, and the Sikh Empire rapidly declined after his death.

The British Excursions in Punjab

Earlier in 1784 AD, the Pitt's India Act gave the British government effective control of the private British East India Company and by 1805 AD the British had gained a strong foothold in India and had become the single territorial power in the Indian subcontinent. After Rangit Singh's death in 1839 AD, the British set their eyes on Punjab, the rich agriculture bread-basket of India. Within six years of his death, the Sikh government had broken down in a series of palace revolutions and assassinations. There was infighting among the many sons of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and new rulers installed died mysteriously. Also at the time there were two other factions contesting for power; the Sikh Sindhanwalias (related to Ranjit Singh) and the Hindu Dogras (a dynasty whose founder was Maharaja Gulab Singh Dogra of the house of Jammu and Kashmir). First, Maharaja Kharak Singh, the eldest son of Ranjit Singh died of poisoning and then his son Maharaja Naunahal Singh, died mysteriously a day later on Nov. 06, 1840. The Dogras were able to install Sher Singh, the half-brother of Maharaja Kharak Singh to the throne immediately. Sher Singh was assassinated by his cousin, an officer of the army, Ajit Singh Sindhanwalia on Sept. 14, 1843 and the same day his powerful and loyal Prime Minister (Wazir) Raja Dhian Singh Dogra was murdered as well. On Sept. 15, 1843, the Sikh army placed Duleep Singh, the 6 year old son of Ranjit Singh to the throne with Maharani Jind Kaur, his mother and youngest wife of Ranjit Singh as his queen regent. Her brother, Jawahar Singh was appointed as the young emperor's guardian and tutor. Actual power, however, resided with the Sikh army, which was itself in the hands of 'Panths' ('panches'), or Sikh military committees. Given the political turmoil that followed Ranjit Singh's death, the soldiers took it upon themselves to protect the

sanctity of the Khalsa Empire, a glorious empire bequeathed to them by their Sher-e-Punjab. And with the grave threat on the eastern frontier in the form of the British, the soldiers started believing they had to take charge to ensure the empire's survival. With their growing involvement in politics, the soldiers had developed a bureaucratic mechanism of their own. Instead of exhibiting loyalty to their commanding officers, they reported to 'panches' selected by themselves. The 'panches' were soldiers appointed from within their ranks to represent the grievances and concerns of the soldiers. The system was modeled on the 'panchayat' system from where the word 'panches' is derived.

Government corruption and political instability is not unique to the Sikh Empire downfall. In fact this weakness has been the cause of the downfall of many empires in history. For example, in the late stages of the Roman Empire, being the Roman emperor had become a highly dangerous job – even a death sentence. The Praetorian Guard—the Roman emperor's personal bodyguards—assassinated and installed new sovereigns at will, and once even auctioned the spot off to the highest bidder. The political rot also extended to the weakening of the Roman legions. For most of its history, Rome's military was the envy of the ancient world but during the decline they had little or no loyalty to the emperor, and their power-hungry officers often turned against the emperor. So it was with the Sikh Empire.

After the death of Maharaja Sher Singh and his wazir, Raja Dhian Singh Dogra, Hira Singh was appointed as the wazir. Hira Singh was the son of Dhian Singh Dogra and a nephew of Maharaja Gulab Singh Dogra (of Jammu). At first, the new wazir took little notice of the young Maharaja Daleep Singh and his mother, Jind Kaur. The mother became fiercely defensive of the rights of her son and pleaded with the military regimental committees to protect his position asking 'who is the real sovereign, Duleep Singh or Hira Singh? If the former, then the Khalsa should ensure that he was not a king with an empty title. The council supported her and she gradually became the symbol of sovereignty. She took control of the government with the approval of the army and cast off her veil. As Regent, she reconstituted the Supreme Council of the Khalsa and restored some balance between the army and the civil administration. She held court, transacted State business in public and reviewed and addressed the troops.

The young Maharani was faced with many problems. Pashaura Singh Kanvar, half-brother of Duleep Singh, was seeking to replace Duleep Singh as Maharaja. The feudal chiefs wanted a reduction in the taxation imposed on them by Hira Singh and the restoration of their jagirs, land grants from which they received income. The army wanted an increase in pay. The cost of the civil and military administration had increased and Gulab Singh Dogra, Raja of Jammu and uncle of Hira Singh, had taken away most of the Lahore Treasury. The power struggle between the various Sikh factions was continuing and some were secretly negotiating with the British forces now amassing on the border. In the continuing intrigues at Lahore between the royals, the Wazir, Hira Singh removed Jawahar Singh as guardian to Duleep Singh and replaced him with Lal Singh as the guardian and tutor of the young Emperor. Hira Singh did not trust Jawahar Singh and had him imprisoned on suspicion of making treasonous overtures to the British. During his imprisonment Jawahar Singh was beaten and tortured.

Meanwhile, the rebellious Prince Pashaura Singh and his brother, Prince Kashmira Singh had taken asylum with Baba Bir Singh at Naurangabad, near Tarn Taran (Tarn Taran Sahib town was founded by the Fifth Sikh Guru, Guru Arjan Dev in the Majha region of the state of Punjab). Baba Bir Singh was a Sikh Saint and a true well-wisher of the dynasty of Ranjit Singh and was deeply grieved at the disaster which had overtaken the royal family through the envy of their own courtiers. Baba Bir Singh's personal influence greatly perturbed Hira Singh who considered Bir Singh's camp as the centre of a Sikh revolt against the Dogra dominance over the Punjab. In May 1844, Hira Singh dispatched a force of 20,000 men and 50 cannons under the command of Mian Labh Singh to destroy Bir Singh's camp. Baba Bir Singh told his men not to fight "How can we attack our brethren?" He was killed by a shell while meditating over the Holy Book. Kashmira Singh, Pashaura Singh's elder brother was also killed in the cannonade, but Pashaura Singh escaped.

The attack upon the holy man Baba Bir Singh and a subsequent attempt by Hira Singh's favorite, Pandit Jalla, to poison Maharani Jind Kaur aroused the ire of the Sikh army. Maharani Jind Kaur who was already furious at the ill-treatment of her brother by Hira Singh turned to the army to get back at the wazir. She appealed to the passion of the soldiers, protectors of the Khalsa Empire, to avenge the humiliation the wazir had wrought on their maharani, the wife of 'Sher-e-Punjab'. Hira

Singh escaped from Lahore with several loads of gold and silver stolen from the treasury, but was pursued by a Sikh force led by Jawahar Singh and Sham Singh Atarivala. They captured and killed him on Dec. 21, 1844 along with his advisers, Pandit Jalla and Gulab Singh's youngest brother. The maharani had won her battle.

After the Wazir Hira Singh's death, Jawahar Singh, Lal Singh, and Gulab Singh all put themselves forward for the position of Wazir; the Maharani selected her brother as Wazir on May 14, 1845. He held the position only briefly and during a tumultuous nine months he persecuted those who had antagonized him in the past. His most significant action was his alleged ordering of the murder of the rebel Prince Pashaura Singh Kanvar, which was carried out after Pashaura had been offered safe conduct and had surrendered. The Khalsa army believed that Jawahar had personally ordered the death, fearing that the prince presented too great a threat to young Duleep Singh. The leaders of the Khalsa demanded Jawahar Singh present himself before them, which he did after much prevarication and attempts at bribery. The panches met and it was decided that Jawahar Singh would be put to death. The justification was the insult meted out to Peshura Singh, a son of their great Maharaja Ranjit Singh. How dare a wazir take the life of a scion of Maharaja Ranjit Singh! The maharani pleaded with the soldiers to spare her brother but they had made up their minds. Maharani Jind Kaur could only look on as her brother, the wazir of the Lahore Durbar, Jawahar Singh, was executed by soldiers of the Khalsa Empire outside the walls of the Lahore Fort on Sept. 21, 1845.

A new wazir, Lal Singh, was appointed by the soldiers. As for the maharani, still reeling from the loss of her brother, she had other plans. She decided, along with Lal Singh and the head of the army Tej Singh, that it was time to cut the power of the soldiers. As the administration collapsed the Lahore Darbar became increasingly vulnerable. Relations with the British had already been strained by the refusal of the Sikhs to allow the passage of British troops through their territory during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838–42). Once the British saw their opportunity, they antagonized the Sikhs into war. On the eastern bank of the Sutlej River, the British monitored the unfolding of the Lahore Durbar carefully. They had seen the assassination of one maharaja after another. They observed as powerful prime ministers (wazirs) found themselves at the mercy of the Khalsa soldiers. The time was ripe for

them to strike. Two campaigns were fought between the Sikhs and the British known in history as the ‘Anglo-Sikh Wars’. The first war was in 1845 to 1846 and the second war lasted from 1848 to 1849.

The Anglo-Sikh Wars

Many historians conclude that the Regent Queen may have actually plotted the fall of Khalsa Army by hastening the First Anglo-Sikh War as the Khalsa Army was no longer under the command of the crown or its appointed commanders. Her plan was to put the Sikh soldiers in a war in which their defeat was assured as a revenge of seeing her brother stabbed over 50 times in front of her eyes by the Khalsa. She decided, along with Lal Singh and the head of the army General Tej Singh, that it was time to cut the power of the soldiers.

On Dec. 11, 1845, urged on by their commanders, the Khalsa soldiers crossed the Sutlej River and in response, the British moved their army to Ferozpore region. Thus began the First Anglo-Sikh War. The Sikhs were led by General Raja Lal Singh and Tej Singh. General Henry Hardinge was in command of the British forces. The battle of Firoze Shehar was fierce and continued into the late night with the British losing the battle. General Hardinge asked his aide de corps to bring out his sword so that he could surrender. Hardinge expected a defeat on the following day and ordered the state papers at Mudki to be burned in this event.

But the next day, Dec. 12, 1845, the battle suddenly took a different course due to the machinations of General Lal Singh. It turned out that General Raja Lal Singh who, with Tej Singh, had betrayed the Sikhs during the course of the war. Gen. Lal Singh had been regularly supplying information and even receiving instructions from British officers before and during the battle. The following morning, the British Army units rallied and drove the Sikhs from the rest of their fortifications. Lal Singh had made no effort to rally or reorganize his army. At this point, Tej Singh's army appeared and the exhausted British army faced defeat and disaster, but Tej Singh inexplicably withdrew.

The British forces won the Battle of Aliwal on Jan. 28, 1846, eliminating the Sikh bridgehead. They attacked the main Sikh bridgehead at Sobraon on Feb. 10, 1846. Tej Singh is said to have deserted the Sikh army early in the battle. The bridges behind the Sikhs broke under British artillery fire, or were ordered to be destroyed behind him by Tej

Singh. The Sikh army was trapped. None of them surrendered, and the British troops showed little mercy. This defeat effectively broke the Sikh army.

The maharani and her entourage had achieved their purpose of reducing the might of the soldiers but a new setup brought with itself a whole new set of problems. A few months later in March, the Treaty of Lahore was signed, assuring the British over-lordship over the affairs of the Lahore Durbar and partial subjugation of the Sikh kingdom and cession of Jammu and Kashmir as a separate princely state under British suzerainty.

In April of 1848, a little incident in Multan provided the British with an excuse to begin the Second Anglo-Sikh War. The British easily defeated the confused and demoralized Khalsa forces, then disbanded them into destitution. The Sikh army eventually surrendered on March 12, 1849 and the Punjab was then annexed by the British. Just a decade after Ranjit Singh's death, the Sikh Empire crumbled, but Sikhism as a faith and way of life did not decline. Clive Dewey has argued that the decline of the empire after Ranjit Singh's death owes much to the 'Jagir-based economic and taxation system' which he inherited from the Mughals and retained. After his death, a fight to control the tax spoils emerged, leading to a power struggle among the nobles and his family from different wives. This struggle ended with a rapid series of palace coups and assassinations of his descendants, and eventually the annexation of the Sikh Empire by the British.

After the Second Anglo-Sikh War, the Sikhs in the Punjab had been rendered 'Armless and Leaderless'. Their forts were destroyed and weapons confiscated. Patriot Sikh leaders were killed or deported. During the first year of the annexation of the Punjab, eight thousand Sikhs were arrested and 300 were put to death by the British. The British then raised new units of Army in the Punjab consisting of Sikhs, Muslims and Hindu Rajputs.

THE BRITISH RULE BEGINS IN PUNJAB

Within a decade of Ranjit Singh's death, the British had total control over Punjab and India. By 1850, they had devised systems to keep their power and rule in place through strengthening their military might and crafting divisive tactics to keep India divided. By 1855, the British had recruited the 'battle-hardened' but unemployed Sikhs into their army in large numbers. There were thousands of Sikhs in the British Army all the way up to Independence from the British in 1947. Thousands of Sikh troops fought and died for the British in the European First World War. By the end of WW-1 hostilities, 125,000 Sikh combatants had seen active service in Europe and beyond in many of the war's forgotten fronts. These included Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq), Aden, Egypt, Palestine, Persia, Arabia, Italy, Salonica, Russia, East and West Africa, on the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey, and as far east as China.

Just as the British recruited Sikhs in their military, they also recruited the Upper class Hindus called Brahmins (Brahmins is the highest caste in Hinduism. It is the caste from which Hindu priests are drawn, and are responsible for teaching and maintaining sacred knowledge) into their civil governance.

The Punjabi Muslims and Sikhs were kept away from all the powers deeming pernicious for the British interests. By design they also exploited religion, sects and cultural differences to carve out a 'divide and rule' strategy that served them well until at least for the next century. Their strategy was to eliminate the sense of patriotism and faithfulness towards the motherland from their minds.

Systematic destruction of Punjabi Culture and Language by British. Prof. Pritam Singh, Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, University of Oxford, UK, highlighted that "language is a fundamental right and the destruction of a language is essentially a political agenda to push back the local culture and language." According to Prof. Pritam Singh, "any struggle for equality in society has to be fought in a local language. In Punjab, or anywhere else, you cannot mobilize people if you don't speak their language and communication in a local language is a must for political struggle." Dr. Saeed Khawar Bhutta. Professor of Punjabi language and literature at Oriental College, University of the Punjab, Lahore,

Pakistan in his paper narrated the sad tale of how Punjab was made illiterate by the British after 1849. *"The British proclaimed that anyone who surrenders a gun will be rewarded with two annas, while the one who surrenders a Punjabi Qaeda will be given six annas for the same act."* Dr. Bhutta quoted from the G.W. Leitner's report on indigenous education system in Punjab that gives the story of how Punjab was made illiterate almost overnight with merely a stroke of pen; and Punjabi was detached from the market economy. Piles of Qaeda's ('books') were collected and burned by the British by posting huge posters soliciting Punjabi Qaeda's.

Materialism, corruption, nepotism, office-seeking nature and rapacity in other possible domains became a permanent feature of their politics and strategy to rule. As they were more inclined to reward loyalty and less sensitive to the sanctity of beliefs, they made several compromises that were detrimental to the feelings of various sections of Indian people, especially Muslims and Sikhs. For example, the control of the Sikh Gurdwaras and associated finances was turned over to materialistic and powerful Hindu Mahants and Pujari's who had been loyal to the British in the two Sikh wars.

In Nankana Sahib Area, the head of the Rai Bular descendants at that time was Rai Sardar Khan Bhatti and he with others of the Bhatti clan strongly protested and objected to this arrangement since they sensed mischief in this act. The British power over-ruled them and The Gurdwara Janam Asthan and Gurdwara Mal Sahib were turned over to the Hindu Mahants. All of them but more particularly the Udasis and Brahmanical sects installed the Hindu idol gods along with the Holy Granth in the Gurdwaras under their control.

Note: the attempt of the British and the Hindu Mahants was to classify the Sikh faith as an uncontested sect of Hindu's in order to make the Sikh's subservient to the Hindu laws. The demoralized Sikhs after their losses in the Sikh Wars did not have the strength to fight this cunning move and had to live with the humiliation of being classified under a Hindu sect – especially knowing the fact that Guru Nanak had rejected the Hindu faith and had strongly contested most Hindu practices and rituals, particularly the worship of idol gods, killing of infant girls, Satti (burning of widows alive alongside the deceased husband), Reincarnation (rebirth or transmigration - a part of the Samsara doctrine

of cyclic existence) and the Hindu caste system among others.

About the British and Hindu designs, Sardar Harbans Singh in his book 'Heritage of the Sikh' states that "The true teachings of Gurus, which had supplied Sikhism its potent principle of reform and regeneration were being obscured and the Sikh religion was losing its characteristic vigour and its votaries were relapsing into beliefs and dogmas from which the Gurus' teaching had extricated them. Absorption into ceremonial Hinduism seemed the course inevitably set for them".

The 325 years of the Muslim Sultanate rule in India and the further 325 years of Mughal Empire in India could not have enjoyed that longevity without evoking considerable goodwill among the Hindu subjects, who were by far in a vast majority. For 650 years, be it the Dehli Sultanate era (1191 - 1527 AD) or Mughal dynasty (1528 - 1857 AD), emperors relied upon Hindu ministers, generals, warriors, accountants, chroniclers and the whole hierarchy of other functionaries to conquer, consolidate, run, administer and manage their vast empire. They had many Hindu Generals (Mansabdars) in their army, most prominent being Tilak, Sondi Rai, Jairaj, Souvana Rai, Jai Sen, Viraj Rai, Raja Jaswant Singh, Raja Mansingh, Bhivan Rai, Nakka, Lodha, Pira, Kishan, Raja Ramdev of Devagiri, Gwalior Raja Ram Shah, Siddi Hambal. Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb's trust of Hindu officers was so great that he is known to rely on none, but the Hindus to guard his palace. In fact the number of Hindu Mansabdar's in the Mughal army grew to the highest during Aurangzeb's reign. They were even greater than those in the tenure of Akbar. (further references on this topic are available in 'Hindu Participation in Muslim Administration in Medieval India, by M. K. A. Siddiqui, Institute of Objective Studies, Kolkata, 2002).

This fact combined with events lends huge credibility to the assertion that upper class Hindus used the Mughal's as pawns to push their own agenda of demonizing Sikhism as they were worried about mass conversion of Hindus to Sikhism. Guru Nanak's teachings resonated with many Hindus who converted to 'Sikhism', so after Guru Nanak's death, the Hindus came up with many schemes to pollute Sikhism with Hindu rituals as a way to trap Sikhs and assimilate them back into the Hindu fold. The upper class Hindus exploited the one single common practices they shared with the Mughals – The Caste System.

Proof of this is that Banda Singh Bahadur was a great reformer and strongly followed Guru Nanak. Following Guru Nanak's teachings he broke down the barriers of caste, creed and religion. He appointed sweepers and cobblers as senior officers before whom high caste Hindus, Brahmins and Kshatriyas stood with folded hands awaiting their orders. Banda Singh distributed all his riches among his followers. He abolished the 'Zamindari' system and established peasant-proprietorship making peasants as actual masters of the soil they till. Both the Mughals and the Hindus were horrified by this. They joined forces against Banda Singh Bahadur to protect the Caste System. The Hindus knew that the Mughal rulers were in India primarily as 'rulers' and not champions of Islam and hence were more interested in securing their throne and gaining additional territory. This is evident from their policy of trusting Hindus as their most trusted Ministers (wazirs) in courts and as Generals (Mansabdars) in their Army – who spearheaded the atrocities against the Sikhs under the Mughals flag. Had the Mughals desired to convert everyone to 'Islam' in India then the Hindu's would have been the real target and not the Sikhs – as Sikhs were in such a small relative minority. Furthermore, a Muslim invader, Babar the Mughal dynasty founder, destroyed the Pathaans in 1521 AD and Nadir Shah, a Pathaan destroyed the Mughals in 1739 AD confirming that these rulers were in India for wealth and power and not to promote Islam.

There were several attempts and movements to reform the Sikhism to its past glory. First one being Nirankari movement, which was started by Baba Dyal (b.1783- d.1855) in 1853. He was a contemporary of Ranjit Singh. A man of humble origin. He preached against the rites and rituals that were creeping into Sikhism. He saw that Sikhism was being assimilated into Hindusim in front of his eyes. His main target was the worship of images against which he preached vigorously. He re-emphasized the Sikh belief in Nirankar—the Formless One. From this, the movement originating from his message came to be known as the Nirankari movement. As mentioned earlier, the Nirankari movement was influential in shaping the views of Tatt Khalsa Sikh beliefs and practices.

In 1873 AD, the Sikhs in Amritsar were so conditioned to having Hindu idols in the Gurdwaras that they attempted to merge Sikhism with Hinduism and formed the Sanatan Singh Sabha as the original Singh

Sabha. It was essentially Sanatan (meaning 'eternal', almost synonymous with Hinduism). In 1879 AD, the Sanatan Sikhs (Udasis, Nirmalas and the Namdharis) were challenged by Tatt Khalsa (the 'True Khalsa') Singh Sabha founded in Lahore (Pakistan) and eventually Sanatan Singh Sabha was marginalized as majority of Sikh community criticized the Sanatan Singh Sabha as having more in common with Hinduism than Sikhism.

Although original Tatt Khalsa are Sikhs made by Sri Guru Gobind Singh, the leader of Tatt Khalsa Singh Sabha was Bhai Gurmukh Singh, a professor at the Oriental College of Lahore. He influenced Bhai Kanh Singh of Nabha, a notable scholar, to write **Mahan Kosh** (encyclopedia of Sikhism) and **Ham Hindu Nahin** *(We are not Hindus).* Bhai Gurmukh Singh and Bhai Kanh Singh also cooperated with Max Arthur MacAuliffe, a divisional judge, to undertake the translation of Granth Sahib (completed in 1909).

Guru Shabad Ratnakar Mahan Kosh, known by its more popular name of 'Mahan Kosh', is a Punjabi language encyclopedia compiled by Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha over fourteen years. It was the first Punjabi encyclopedia and contains more than 70,000 words, some of them have sufficient reference from Guru Granth Sahib, Dasam Granth, Gur Pratap Suraj Granth and from other Sikhism books. It is considered a groundbreaking work in terms of its impact and its level of scholarship. Mahan Kosh has 64,263 entries arranged in the alphabetical order of the Gurmukhi script covering religious and historical terms in the Sikh canon. Each entry records the etymology and different meanings of a term "according to its usage at different places in different works" alongside textual quotations. When words of Perso-Arabic or Sanskrit origin appear they are reproduced in their original scripts to inform readers of their correct pronunciation and connotation.

While studying two existing titles, Pandit Tara Singh Narotam's Granth Guru Girarth Kos (1895) and Hazara Singh's Sri Guru Granth Kos (1899), Bhai Kanh Singh of Nabha realized there would be great value in a lexicography on words occurring in Sikh historical texts as well as in the Guru Granth Sahib because it would promote literacy and critical studies in Punjabi.

On May 12, 1912 Bhai Kanh Singh of Nabha resigned his position in

Nabha State and began work on the project. His original patron, Maharaja Brijindar Singh of Faridkot State, who had earlier sponsored scholarly work on the Guru Granth Sahib died in 1918. His other patron, Maharaja Ripudaman Singh was forced to abdicate his throne in 1923 by the British. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala State then offered to underwrite the entire expense of printing. Kahn Singh finished the work on February 6, 1926 and printing began on October 26, 1927 at the Sudarshan Press in Amritsar, owned by the poet Dhani Ram Chatrik. The first printing, in four volumes, was finished on April 13, 1930. The Languages Department of Punjab, Patiala then published Mahan Kosh in one volume and it has gone through three editions, the latest released in 1981. The Punjabi University in Patiala has translated it into English.

THE MAHANT ERA AND SAKA NANKANA

The seventy years post Sikh Wars (from 1850 to 1920 AD) were extremely painful for Rai Bular's descendants as well as the Sikh community in Nankana Sahib. It was painful to see their land being usurped and mismanaged by total strangers purely for profit and for financing the British wars. Wheat and Rice grown on 750 Morrabas (approx. 20,000 acres) of land gifted by Rai Bular to Guru Nanak was being used to finance wars instead of promoting peace. The grains were shipped to feed the British Army on the battle fields - even as far away as South Africa where the Second Boer War was being fought between the British Empire and two Boer states, the South African Republic (Republic of Transvaal) and the Orange Free State, over the Empire's influence in South Africa. All this while there were six famines in India in a short period of 40 years (Upper Doab famine of 1860–61, Orissa famine of 1866, Rajputana famine of 1869, Bihar famine of 1873–74, Great Famine of 1876–78 (also Southern India famine of 1876–78), Indian famine of 1896–97 and the Indian famine of 1899–1900). Over 15 million Indian natives perished in hunger during the British Raj while the Mahants were amassing wealth and the British were feeding their soldiers.

The collective helplessness of Rai Bular's descendants and the Tatt Khalsa community only worsened when the British further financially empowered the Hindu Mahants in Punjab. With availability of water from the irrigation canals built by the British, the Gurdwaras and agriculture land of Nankana Sahib became the most lucrative enterprise

for the Mahants. Agricultural incomes of the Mahants sky rocketed, and they became richer and more powerful - leading luxuriant and in some cases immoral life styles, so much so, that Naraindass (Narayan Das), the Mahant of Gurdwara Janam Asthan had publically retained Muslim women as prostitutes. It was also alleged that several Sikh pilgrim ladies had been raped and maltreated in Janam Asthan by the Mahant and his associates. Furthermore, some Mahants had secretly sold off and even otherwise transferred the Gurdwara lands to their other family members and kin. This was the state of Gurdwaras all over the Punjab. The leaders of the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar on 15th November 1920 to assess the situation and formed a committee called the 'Shiromani Committee' (Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee - SGPC), to address the Gurdwara problems in their entirety. They decided to oust the Mahants and Pujaris from all the Gurdwaras, remove the idols and all symbols of Hinduism and take the management of the Gurdwaras in their own hands. The chosen method was to remain strictly non-violent and even in cases of aggression from the Mahants or any other party the Sikhs were to offer only passive resistance.

On the morning of 20th February, 1921, a group of about 130 unarmed Sikhs led by Bhai Lachhman Singh entered the Gurdwara Janamashtan in Nankana Sahib. The Mahant had advance warning of their arrival and had hired dozens of Pathan mercenaries and Hindu Mahant loyalists who took up positions and hid behind the Gurdwara's high walls. When the Sikhs entered the Gurdwara, the mercenaries started shooting indiscriminately and butchered the non-resisting Sikhs, including those who were already busy in their prayers within the Gurdwara precincts. More than 260 Sikhs were killed, the youngest of them being a little boy of eight years, Sardar Darbara Singh, son of Sardar Kehar Singh. The Mahant's mercenaries then collected the dead as well as the wounded into various heaps, sprinkled kerosene oil and burnt them all.

The news of this criminal act spread like wild fire all over and another group of 2,200 men led by Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar arrived at Nankana Sahib on the 21st afternoon. The Mahant was very well connected and no one was daring to file formal charges against him for his arrest. Fortunately, the Zaildar of the region was one of the 15th descendants of Rai Bular, the son of Rai Sardar, the Bhatti elder who had reservations about giving charge of the Gurdwaras to the Mahants three decades earlier. The 'Zaildar' was a position based title of the 'Grand Jagirdar'

(landlord) of the area, who was in charge of a 'Zail' which was an administrative unit of group of villages during the British Indian Empire. As Zaildar, Rai Rehmat wielded sufficient authority and despite threats to his life from the Mahant's mercenary troops, he boldly ordered an arrest warrant of the powerful Mahant. Mahant Narayan Das was arrested but many of the mercenaries had scattered and escaped. Gurdwara Janamashtan was cordoned by the British military force that conveniently arrived only after the incident was well over. After this ordeal was over, the Government handed over the possession of Janamashtan to a committee of seven Sikhs headed by Sardar Harbans Singh, a descendant of General Sham Singh of Attari, the hero of the battle of Sabroan fought by the Sikhs against the English in 1846 AD. Thus control of Gurdwara Janamashtan passed into the hands of the Sikh community as a whole. Every year on 21st of February, Guru Granth Sahib's Swaroop with Bullet marks is brought to Deewan (assembly) from 2pm to 4pm for darshan of the Sikh Sangat at Gurdwara Janamashtan to honor the Shaheeds.

Mahatma Gandhi visited Nankana Sahib on March 3, 1921. Addressing the gathering, Mahatma said: *"I have come to share your anguish and grief. It is interesting indeed to note that the Sikhs in this drama remained peaceful and non-violent from the start to the end. This (role of the Sikhs) has greatly added to the glory and prestige of India. All indications point to the fact that the cruel and barbaric action is the second edition of Jallianwala Bagh massacre; rather more evil and more invidious than even Jallianwala". Gandhi further spoke: "the action of these dimensions could not be perpetrated by the Mahant alone. The government officers are also involved in this heinous crime. Where had the authorities gone when the Mahant was making preparations for murderous plans?"*

Mahant Narayan Das and the few captured mercenaries were charged with murder and were sentenced to death. The Mahants of the other five Gurdwaras at Nankana Sahib peacefully gave over the control of their respective shrines to the Sikh Committee, and some of them arrived at a settlement regarding the properties held by them while a few resisted. Eventually the Punjab Sikh Gurdwaras Act was enforced in 1926 under which a specially constituted Gurdwara Tribunal heard the claims and counter claims of the parties and barring four or five out of about 50 property cases - all were decided in favor of the committee.

Bhai Pheru Morcha - 1922

In 1922, the Gurdwara Sangat Sahib (also known as Gurdwara Bhai Pheru) incident took place. This Gurdwara is located in 'Mien ke Maur' in Lahore district, about 15 km from Changa Manga railway station. This Gurdwara is dedicated to the memory of Bhai Pheru (1640- 1706), a masand in the time of Guru Har Rai who was honoured for his devotion by Guru Gobind Singh with the titles of Sachchi Dahri (True Bearded) and Sangat Sahib. This was an important shrine, with 2,750 acres of land attached to it, and was being managed by Mahant Kishan Das.
After the Saka Nankana earlier in 1921, Hindu Mahants (priests) had started voluntarily handing over all Gurdwaras under their control to the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). Mahant Kishan Das transferred the Gurdwara Bhai Pheru to the Committee on Dec. 28 1922. The Mahant later went back on the agreement he had signed and petitioned the British government to have the shrine and the lands restored to him. On Dec. 7. 1923 the police arrested the Manager, Jagat Singh, and eleven other representatives of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. The possession of the shrine and the estate was restored to Mahant Kishan Das. However, the decision of the deputy commissioner of Lahore on the Gurdwara lands went in favour of the Shiromani Committee and, as its representatives they arrived at the Gurdwara to take charge. Mahant Kishan Das and his tenant Pala Ram, brother of Mahant Narain Das, of Sri Nankana Sahib, lodged a complaint with police that the Akalis were forcibly taking possession of his property. The Police arrested 34 Akalis on January 2, 1924. The government revised its earlier decision given in favour of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and passed fresh orders declaring Pala Ram to be temporarily in possession of the land. Akalis launched a Morcha (gathering for protest) in protest even as the morcha at Jaito was still continuing. Jathas or batches of Akali volunteers started marching to Bhai Pheru from different parts of the district.

On January 5, 1924, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee took the campaign into its own hands. By 10 September 1925, the number of arrests had reached 6,372. Eventually the Gurdwara and the lands attached to it came under the Committee's control after the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1925 was passed by the Punjab Legislative Council, and the court case too was decided in the Committee's favour in June 1931.

Post 1947 Sikh events

Post 1947, the Sikhs the Sikhs have struggled for constitutional rights along with granting Sikhs' their religious rights which had already been granted to other communities. Indian Government has dragged the issues using prolonged negotiations and has shown little concern for the Sikh demands. In order to divert public attention from the real issues, the Indian government used their entire media to present a false image of the Sikh struggle for constitutional and religious rights to brand it as a secessionist movement trying to break up India. To make matters worse, the Nirankari movement was hijacked by Arya Samajis and other neo Hindu fanatics who wanted Sikhs to assimilate into the Hindu religion. These New Neo Nirankaris (also called Nakali Nirankaris) who believed in "Living Gurus" confronted Sikhs at Amritsar in 1978 on the Baisakhi day (April 13, 1978). The living guru "Gurbachan" of these Nakali Nirankaris got permission from the authorities of the Amritsar district to do the procession in the Sikhs main city Amritsar on Vaisakhi creating an extremely inflammable situation. During the procession in the Sikhs main city Amritsar on Vaisakhi day, he was trying to create Seven Stars just like Guru Gobind Singh had created five beloved one's, obviously to prove to the Sikhs that he is more or less like Guru Gobind Singh (a very serious blasphemy for Sikhs, it is like telling Christians or Muslims that "I am Christ" or "I am Mohammad"). When the Sikhs heard that the 'Nakali Nirankari Gurbachan Singh' was holding a procession in Amritsar and was shouting slogans against the Satguru and shouting insults against the Sikh religion, a confrontation was not a surprise. Some Sikhs of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha (The AKJ has been called a purist or fundamentalist group within Sikhism because it believes that the words of the Guru Granth are literally the words of the Guru, asserting that no interpretation of scriptural passages by others is necessary, whose meaning is clear and self-evident) and the Bhindra Jatha (led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale) were stopped by the police authorities and were fired upon killing 13 and wounding over 70 Sikhs. After the 1978 clash between the Sikhs and Nakali Nirankari's, further tensions between Hindu and Sikhs grew in India.

Unfortunately, the Hindu's of Punjab also did not stand behind the rights of the Sikhs and the very State they lived in and instead decided to side with the Indian government imploring it to take strict action against the Sikhs. Eventually tragedy struck when the Indian government launched an attack on June 6th 1984 on the Sikh Golden

Temple in Amritsar and on several other Gurdwaras throughout Punjab. Thousands of innocent Sikhs were massacred and the damage done to the Sikh psyche was irreversible. June 6, 1984, was like a dagger through the heart for Sikhs everywhere in the world and deeply damaged and Hindu-Sikh relations. These relations can only be repaired over time and that too if the 'Hindutva' mindset is minimized in India and India returns to its core principles of 'Secularism' as a dominant mindset. Hindutva is an ideology seeking to establish the hegemony of Hindus and the Hindu way of life. Hindutva (which means "Hinduness") is the predominant form of Hindu nationalism in India. The term was popularized by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in 1923. It is championed by the Hindu nationalist volunteer organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Hindu Sena. The Hindutva movement has been described as "almost fascist in the classical sense", adhering to a disputed concept of homogenized majority and cultural hegemony – and with an extreme form of "conservatism" and "ethnic absolutism". Hindutva opposes the core concept of Hinduism – which is leading a meaning-full life. Hinduism guides people towards Moksha, whereas Hindutva guides people to acquire political power. Hinduism is a religious believe, but Hindutva is a political movement.

A gifted child boy born in Talwandi - Guru Nanak, taught the world that 'Truth is High - but living a Truthful life is Higher'. He taught us that one should live an honest and truthful life. That one must focus more on 'Function' and less on 'Form'. That one must be 'Human First' before anything else.

His followers, the people of the Sikh faith have endured tremendous amount of hardships, pain and suffering at the hands of a select ignorant and uncompassionate Mughals, Afghan Invaders, Hindu Elites and British colonists over the centuries who tried relentlessly to suppress his message of peace and interfaith harmony.

The major effort to suppress the message of Guru Nanak started immediately after Emperor Akbar's death in 1605 AD, when Jehangir became the fourth Mughal Emperor. Jehangir's ministers (both Muslims and Hindus) impressed upon Emperor Jehangir to counter the spread of the teachings of social equality of Guru Nanak - teachings in which all people have the same status and there are no legally enforced social classes and caste boundaries. Guru Arjan, the fifth Sikh Guru leading this

message had growing in popularity which made many fanatic Hindus and Muslims jealous, particularly Chandu Shah, an influential Hindu banker and revenue official of Jahangir and Prithi Chand, the older brother of Guru Arjan.

Emperor Jehangir, who was a widely considered to have been a weak and incapable ruler (reference: Orientalist Henry Beveridge, editor of the Tuzk-e-Jahangiri, who compares Jahangir to the Roman emperor Claudius, for both were "weak men... in their wrong places as rulers") had Guru Arjan imprisoned where he soon after died. Ironically Emperor Jehangir was so ill-informed that he was not even clear on what Sikhism stood for.

It was only after Guru Arjan's unwarranted death, the sixth Guru, Guru Har Gobind Rai made the difficult and painful decision to ask his Sikhs to take up arms and learn the skills of the sword to defend themselves and others from tyranny and cruelty of governments and rulers or else Guru Nanak's message will perish. The Sikhs were left with no choice but to arm themselves. From 1606 onwards, the Sikhs began to learn how to use the sword and over time became skillful and fierce fighters for their survival. Fortunately, due to the strong belief and commitment of the Sikhs to the teachings of Guru Nanak, no power and no amount of wealth has been able to derail the Sikhs from their course of seeking a lifestyle of 'Truthful Living' since.

The Sikh faith has survived numerous assaults, perhaps more than any other known faith. There is no doubt that Guru Nanak's followers survived because of their resilience and spiritually rooted beliefs about justice and dignity without fear as evidenced in *Zafarnama* (literally, "epistle of victory") - the letter sent by 10th and last living Guru, Guru Gobind Singh to the last of the great Mughals, Emperor Aurangzeb in 1705. Over the past centuries, Sikhs have grown in numbers and will continue to grow because of their strong belief in Guru Nanak's message that was first broadcast from Rai Bhoe-Di-Talwandi and then carried on foot to many places in our world.

Today, wherever you go in the world, one can see that the Sikh community is exemplary in hard work, honesty, respect for the women, respect for other faiths and cultures, compassion for the less privileged and constantly vying for living a peaceful and harmonious life. What else

could be a better testament to the success of Guru Nanak and Rai Bular's message?

Nankana Sahib Today

The total area of the estate that had been gifted to Guru Nanak by Rai Bular including the non-agricultural land under the town of Nankana Sahib, various habitations of the Gurdwara tenants, approach roads, irrigation channels, and the railway line, comprising 17,675 acres was declared to be original Gurdwara property, though some of it had been acquired by the Government for public purposes. The actual agricultural area gifted by Rai Bular that finally passed into the hands of the Sikh Committee was about 15,927 acres. Ironically, even after 1947 partition, the greedy business minded people, real-estate con-artists and even corrupt government officials and politicians constantly schemed to transfer this gifted land illegally, either for phony projects to make a quick profit or to transfer the land to their relatives and kin. Fortunately, Rai Bular's descendants keep a close eye and remain vigilant and quickly highlight and thwart such acts of theft and fraud on Guru Nanak's land. As long as Rai Bular's descendants live, this land shall be guaranteed to remain the Property of Guru Nanak.

On Feb 06, 2013, a ruling by Justice Sheikh Azmat Saeed of the Pakistan Supreme Court observed that the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) and even members of the Sikh community had no right to dispose of the land and these properties would remain part of the Gurdwaras forever.

The kernel of love, sown by the great humanist Guru Nanak and his revered disciple Rai Bular continued to sprout and flourish over centuries. Rai Hussein Bhatti, the 15th generation head of the descendants of Rai Bular Sahib is credited with personally escorting over one thousand Hindus and Sikhs to the Pakistan-India border during the turbulence of the 1947 partition of India by the British. He established the village of Kot Hussain, just three miles from Gurdwara Janamashtan, where people from all castes lived together as a single family.

The Ten Gurus (1469 AD – 1708 AD)

#	Name	Guruship on	Prakash DOB	Date of Death	Aged	Father
1	**Guru Nanak**	April 15, 1469	April 15,1469	Sept. 22,1539	69	Mehta Kalu
2	**Guru Angad**	Sept. 7,1539	March 31,1504	March 29,1552	48	Baba Pheru
3	**Guru Amar Das**	March 25,1552	May 5,1479	Sept.1,1574	105	Tej Bhan Bhalla
4	**Guru Ram Das**	August 29,1574	Sept. 24,1534	Sept.1,1581	47	Baba Hari Das
5	**Guru Arjan**	August 28,1581	April 15,1563	May 30,1606	43	Guru Ram Das
6	**Guru Hargobind**	May 30,1606	June 19,1595	March 3,1644	49	Guru Arjan
7	**Guru Har Rai**	Feb. 28,1644	Feb.26,1630	Oct. 6,1661	31	Baba Gurdita
8	**Guru Har Krishan**	Oct. 6,1661	July 7,1656	March 30,1664	8	Guru Har Rai
9	**Guru Tegh Bahadur**	March 20,1665	April 1,1621	Nov.11,1675	54	Guru Hargobind
10	**Guru Gobind Singh**	Nov. 11,1675	Dec.22,1666	Oct. 6, 1708	42	Guru Tegh Bahadur
11	**Guru Granth Sahib**	Oct. 6,1708	Sept.1,1604	Eternal	--	

WAYS OF SIKH LIVING TODAY

In Sikhism, worship is a way of life. Many Sikhs believe that they should dedicate their lives to **Waheguru** and follow the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib. Sikhs always try to keep Waheguru in their mind, which will ensure their actions are **Gurmukh**, meaning God-centred.

Amrit Sanskar initiation ceremony: The Amrit Sanskar ceremony is an important event in a Sikh's life. It shows that a Sikh has decided to show commitment to the Khalsa. This ceremony was first initiated by Guru Gobind Singh when he founded the Khalsa in 1699. Some of the key features of the Amrit Sanskar ceremony are:

- The person who is being initiated into Khalsa wears the five Ks.
- At least six Amritdhari Sikhs (Sikhs who have already been initiated) are present at the ceremony.
- A **Granthi** reads from the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The Panj Pyare - the group of Sikhs who perform the Amrit Sanskar ceremony - then sit around the cauldron and stir the Amrit mixture (a mixture of sugar and water) with a Khanda (double-edge straight sword)**.**
- The person who is being initiated is given the name Singh, meaning 'Lion', if they are male and Kaur, meaning 'Princess', if they are female.
- The congregation then share Karah Parshad (It is a type of semolina halva made with equal portions of whole-wheat flour, clarified butter, and sugar).

Amritdhari Sikhs and Sahajdhari Sikhs

The discussion of the intricacies of today's Sikh faith is not in the scope of this book nor does the author has a deep understanding of the politics and other aspects that give rise to these intricacies. However it is important to mention - at a very high level, the events that gave rise to these intricasies. To understand this, consider a large pool of people roughly 500 years ago, who inspired by the teachings of Guru Nanak and the Gurus that followed, gradually give up the rigid caste practices of Brahmanism and the codified rituals of Hindu idol worship and Satti, and moved towards a deeper understanding of the idea of one God of

all humanity echoed in the Sufi/Bhakti tradition by Muslim and Hindu poets, and from various castes including Dalits. However, invaders, regional rulers and orthodox zealots of the time form an alliance and persecute these ever-growing people to protect their hierarchy, caste, traditions and rituals. Feeling the need to defend themselves and rise against injustice, Guru Gobind created a group of armed warriors - the Khalsa, or the pure. Like any army, the Khalsa has its discipline and codes.

Over time, the rich and immensely meaningful spectrum of Sikh thought of Guru Nanak and the fierce protection of this thought by Guru Gobind – which at that time could only be protected by taking up arms, gave those seeking to divide the Sikhs an opportunity to create narratives and make followers choose between the legacy of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind as if their thoughts were any different. The fact is that Guru Gobind had no choice left but to create the Khalsa code to protect the Sikh faith without which the Sikhs might have perished altogether. As Guru Gobind Singh wrote in Persian in the 'Zafarnamah';

"Chun kar az hameh heelate dar guzasht, Halal ast burdaan bi-shamsher dast" (When all has been tried and justice is not yet in sight, it is then right to pick up the sword, it is then right to fight)… Guru Gobind Singh, ZAFARNAMAH.

With this as the backdrop now in the modern world, there are generally two ways of 'Sikh living'. There is the **Amritdhari** way and the **Shahjdhari** way. The Amritdhari Sikhs are the individuals who have gone through the **Amrit Sanskar initiation** ceremony. These Sikhs belong to the Khalsa. They must follow the rules of the Rahit Maryada, the Sikh code of conduct to include:

- They must wear the five Ks, which are; the Kesh, the Kanga, the Kara, the Kachera and the Kirpan. In addition to not cutting their hair, they must always keep it clean and most wear a turban.
- They must pay Daswandh (10% earnings to the poor).
- They must not eat meat that has been ritually slaughtered (such as halal meat). However, most Amritdhari Sikhs are vegetarian.
- They must not drink alcohol or gamble.

- They must not arrange marriages for their children for financial gain. modern

Sikhs who have not gone through the **Amrit Sanskar initiation** ceremony are known as Sahajdhari Sikhs (Sahajdhari or Sehajdhari - literally means "slow adopter"). The Sahajdhari Sikhs believe in all the tenets of Sikhism and the teaching of the Sikh Gurus but do not put all of them into practice. These Sikhs follow the Guru Granth Sahib but have not been initiated into the Khalsa. These Sikhs are just as much a part of the sangat as Amritdhari Sikhs. Anybody who is part of a Sikh family can be part of the sangat.

The reasons for not being part of the Khalsa are many, including not being disciplined enough to maintain the Khalsa discipline and code of conduct or due to personal reasons such as perhaps lack of commitment. In the Sikh community these reasons are considered valid, as to renege upon them or break the Khalsa code of conduct, once becoming a baptized Sikh Khalsa, is considered one of the greatest sins in Sikhism, so it is better not to commit (by not becoming a baptized Khalsa Sikh) rather than to fall short later. They may have aspirations of receiving the rites of Khalsa baptism one day and maintaining the Five Ks, nevertheless, the ultimate ideal which they must realize in their lifetime is to become a baptized Sikh - a Khalsa.

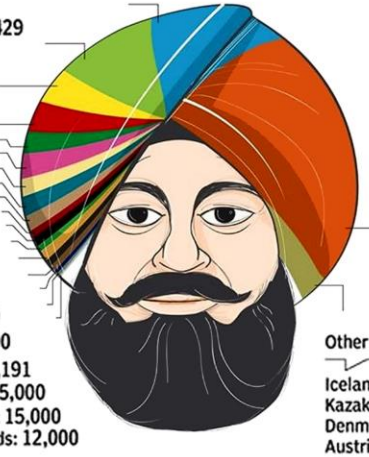
THE FIVE K'S OF KHALSA

Kesh (uncut hair)
Kara (a steel bracelet)
Kangha (wooden comb)
The five Ks of Sikhism
Kaccha - also spelt Kachh, Kachera (cotton underwear)
Kirpan (steel sword)

1. Kesh (uncut hair)
2. Kara (a steel bracelet)
3. Kangha (a wooden comb)
4. Kirpan (steel sword)
5. Kaccha (cotton underwear)

SIKH DIASPORA IN THE WORLD

With people from diverse ethnicities embracing Sikhism, Guru Nanak's message of inclusiveness and universal humanism goes worldwide



10 OUT 300 SIKHS

in Brazil are 'Amritdharis'; the remaining are 'Sehajdharis'. Though they are not baptized, they live and dress like Sikhs

Other Countries: 73,161

Iceland: 100 | Argentina: 300
Kazakhstan: 800 | Ireland: 1,200
Denmark: 2,000 | Japan: 2,000 | Fiji: 2,577
Austria: 2,794 | Afghanistan: 3,000
Lebanon: 3,000 | Malawi: 3,000
Niger: 3,000 Zambia: 3,000 | Norway: 5,000
Nepal: 5,890 | China: 7,500 | Mexico: 8,000
France: 10,000 Belgium: 10,000

SIKH SCALE

HIGH ← SIKH POPULATION → LOW

'CHINESE' SIKHS

US-based Sunder Singh Khalsa could very well be the first Sikh of Chinese origin. He embraced Sikhism under the influence of Yogi Harbhajan Singh in 1970-71 and runs a store called Khalsa Jewellers. Malaysia-based turban wearing Chinese-origin Sikh, Jasmeet Kaur discovered Sikhism in 2004-05. Vancouver-based Chinese origin Pat Cheung became Pat Singh Cheung, after looking at langar — Guru Nanak Free Kitchen. He has already grown hair and beard and ties turban and intends to become an Amritdhari

LIST OF ALL SIKH GURDWARAS IN PAKISTAN

Names	City / Town
Balochistan Province	
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Kallat	Kallat
Gurdwara Tilgenji Sahib, Quetta	Quetta
KPK (Kyber Pakhtun Khawa) Province	
Gurdwara Bhai Than Singh, Attock	Attock
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Balakot (Hazara)	Balakot, Hazara
Gurdwara Bhai Bannu Mangat	Bannu
Gurdwara Danna Khel, Bannu	Bannu
Gurdwara Jogiwara, Bannu	Bannu
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Dhamial	Dhamial
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Chitti Gatti, Mansehra, Distt. Hazara	Mansehra
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Mansehra	Mansehra
Gurdwara Patshahi, Naralil	Naralil
Gurdwara Bhai Joga Singh, Peshawar	Peshawar
Gurdwara Gurhattti, Peshawar	Peshawar
Gurdwara Sri Diyal Sar Topi, Rakh Topi, KPK	Rakh Topi
Northern Areas	
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Balakot	Balakot
Gurdwara Chota Nanakiana, Sakardu	Sakardu
Punjab Province	
Gurdwara Dharam Shala, Pehli Patshahi	-
Gurdwara Panjvin Patshahi, Sheikhrumi	-
Gurdwara Shala, Bhai Hamam Singh Ji	-
Gurdwara Shikar Gurah Sahib Kachha	-

Gurdwara Puncham Patshahi, Beharwal, Distt. Kasur	Beharwal
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Burewala	Burewala
Khuh Baba Farid 17 Eb, Burewala	Burewala
Gurdwara Panjvin Patshahi, Chak Ram Das, Gujranwala Distt.	Chak Ram Das
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Kattas, Chakwal	Chakwal
Gurdwara Ameer Shah Ji, D.I. Khan	D.I. Khan
Gurdwara Dharamshala Guru Nanak Dev Ji	D.I. Khan
Gurdwara Kali Devi, D.I.Khan	D.I. Khan
Gurdwara Darbar Sri Chand Bhumman Shah, 18Km from Dipalpur	Dipalpur
Gurdwara Chota Nankiana, Dipalpur, Okara	Dipalpur
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Kotli Bhaga Village, Eimenabad	Eimenabad
Gurdwara Bhai Lalu Di Khuhi, Eimenabad	Eimenabad
Gurdwara Chaki Sahib, Eimenabad	Eimenabad
Gurdwara Rohri Sahib, Eimenabad	Eimenabad
Gurdwara Shaheed Bhai Daleep Singh Ji, Chak 132 RB (Chak Jhumra)	Faisalabad
Gurdwara Sacha Sauda, Choorhkana/Farooqabad	Farooqabad
Gurdwara Sach Khand, Choorhkana/Farooqabad	Farooqabad
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi Fateh Bhinder (Sialkot Distt.)	Fateh Bhinder
Gurdwara Damdma Saheb, Gujranawala	Gujranawala
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Galotian Kalan, Near Gujranwala	Gujranwala
Gurdwara Bhai Lalu, Village Tatliali, District Gujranwala	Gujranwala
Gurdwara Khara Sahib, Bhaike Mattu (2Km from Noshehra' Virkan, Tehsil Gujranwala)	Gujranwala
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Bazurgwal Village, Union Council of Gujrat District	Gujrat
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Gujrat	Gujrat

Gurdwara NanakSar, Dinga, Gujrat	Gujrat
Mizar Hazrat Shah Daula, Gujrat	Gujrat
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Hafizabad	Hafizabad
Gurdwara Guru Ramdas Ji Dhuni, Hafizabad	Hafizabad
Gurdwara Ichhaprik Vinni, Hafizabad	Hafizabad
Gurdwara Pind Bachhe, Hafizabad	Hafizabad
Gurdwara NanakSar, Harrapa	Harrapa
Gurdwara Punja Sahib, Hassan Abdal	Hassan Abdal
Gurdwara Kir Ji Sahib, Jaesukhwala	Jaesukhwala
Gurdwara Bhai Karam Singh, Jehlum	Jehlum
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi Bal Gundai, Tila Joggian, Jehlum	Jehlum
Gurdwara Bhai Khan Chand at Magghiana, Distt. Jhang	Jhang
Gurdwara Garh Shah Fatah, Jhang	Jhang
Gurdwara NanakSar, Jhang	Jhang
Gurdwara Dharam Shala Bhai Hema Ji Magghiana, Jhang	Jhang
Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur, Narowal	Kartarpur
Gurdwara Baba Ram Thaman Ji, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Bhai Behiul Qadivind, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Haulm Sahib Bhamavan, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Jhari Sahib Targe, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Maal Ji Sahib, KanganPur, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Manji Sahib Manak Deke, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi Alpa, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi Bheelgrani, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Tham Sahib Jumber, Kasur	Kasur
Gurdwara Janam Asthan Mata Saheb Kaur Ji	Kaur

Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Chungi Amarsadhu,	Lahore
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Guru Mangat, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Jhallian, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Minhala Kalan, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Padhana Village, Distt, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Rampura, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Baoli Sahib, Rang Mahal, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Beri Sahib Kharak, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Budhu Da Aava, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chaubacha Sahib, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chaumala Sahib, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Hadyara Village, Distt Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Mozang, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Chota Nankiana, Manga, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Dera Sahib, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Devan Khana, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Janam Asthan Bebe Nanaki, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Sat Guru Ram Dass Ji, Chuna Mandi Bazar, Dehli Darwaza	Lahore
Gurdwara Laal Khooh, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Lahora Sahib, Jahman, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Nanak Garh, Badami Bagh, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi Manak, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Samadhi Baba Shri Chand, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Shaheed Gunj Bhai Mani Singh Ji, Masti Gate	Lahore
Gurdwara Shaheed Gunj Bhai Taroo Singh Ji, Naulakha Bazar	Lahore

Gurdwara Shaheed Gunj Singh Singhania, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Tibba Baba Farid, Lahore	Lahore
Mizar Sain Hazrat Mian Meer Ji	Lahore
Samadh Baba Shri Chand, Lahore	Lahore
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Chohatta Mufti Baqar	Lahore
Gurdwara Bal Lila, Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Sacchi Manji Pehli Patshahi, Haftmadar	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Kabar Rai Bular, Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Kirara Sahib, Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Maal Ji Sahib, Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Panjvin & Chhevin Patshahi, Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Panjvin Patshahi, Jatri Village, (Bhai Pheru-Khunda / Balluki Head Work)	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Patti Sahib, Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Tamboo Sahib, Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Mallah village, Shah Gharib (9 miles from Narowal)	Narowal
Gurdwara Chota Nankiana, Hujra Shah Muqeem, Okara	Okara
Gurdwara Bhuman Shah, Distt. Okara	Okara
Gurdwara Chota Nankiana, Okara	Okara
Gurdwara NanakSar, Tibba Abhor, Distt Pakpattan	Pakpattan
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Pakpattan	Pakpattan
Gurdwara Tibba Nanaksar, Pakpattan	Pakpattan
Gurdwara Panjvin Patshahi, Hanjra, (near Pattoki / Lahore)	Pattoki
Gurdwara Malrhdoompur, Pohran	Pohran
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi Deoke, Pusrur	Pusrur

Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Rasool Nagar	Rasool Nagar
Gurdwara Bhai Mani Singh, Rawalpindi	Rawalpindi
Gurdwara Nirankari, Rawalpindi	Rawalpindi
Gurdwara Singh Sabah, Rawalpindi	Rawalpindi
Gurdwara Choa Sahib, Rothas	Rohtas
Dargah Baba Farid Ganj Shakar	Sahiwal
Gurdwara Nanaksar, Sahiwal	Sahiwal
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Seoke	Seoke
Gurdwara Ajnianwala, 20 miles from Sheikhupura on Hafizabad Road	Sheikhupura
Chillah Gah Hazrat Hamza Ghaus, (near Gurdwara Baba Bair Sahib, Mohalla Baba Bair)	Sialkot
Gurdwara Baoli Sahib, Sialkot	Sialkot
Gurdwara Ber Sahib, Sialkot	Sialkot
Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi, Dhilwan	Sialkot
Gurdwara Gurusar Rehsma, Sialkot	Sialkot
Gurdwara Nanaksar Tilakpur, Sialkot	Sialkot
Gurdwara Talhi Sahib Rehsma, Sialkot	Sialkot
Gurdwara Thara Sahib, Uchsharif	Uch Sharif
Gurdwara Guru Da Kotha, Wazirabad	Wazirabad
Sindh Province	
Gurdwara NanakVara, Kandhkot	Kandhkot
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi Clifton, Karachi	Karachi
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Karachi	Karachi
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi Bulani, Larkana	Larkana
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Mirpur Khas	Mirpur Khas
Gurdwara Thara Sahib, Sakhi Sarwar	Sakhi Sarwar
Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Shikarpur Sindh	Shikarpur

Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi, Jindpur Sukkhur	Sukkhur
Gurdwara Sadhu Bela, Sukkur	Sukkhur
Dharam Shala, Bhai Harnam Singh Ji	
Dharam Shala, Pehli Patshahi	

Key Dates in Guru Nanak's Life and Sikh History

Date	Event	Location
1451	Sultan Bahlul Khan Lodhi overthrew Alam Shah of the Sayyid dynasty and became Sultan of Delhi Sultanate.	Delhi
April 15, 1469	**Birth of Guru Nanak**	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1476	Age 7 Yrs., Discovery by Nanki and Rai Bular of young Nanak's extraordinary knowledge	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
	Nanak starts School with Pundit Gopal and later with Pundit Brijlal.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1478	Age 9 Yrs., Nanak starts learning Persian from Maulvi Kutb-ud-din.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1479	Marriage of Guru Nanak's sister, Bibi Nanki to Jai Ram.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1480	Age 11 Yrs., Guru Nanak refuses to wear sacred thread on day of Upanayanam / Janeu. He also starts to shun all Hindu customs and rituals.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
	Rai Bular witnesses the miracle related to young Nanak and unattended cows in a field damaging crops.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
	Rai Bular witnesses the miracle where a Cobra snake is protecting Young Nanak from the Sun.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
	Rai Bular witnesses the miracle where a Tree's shade remains fixed on Young Nanak.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1485	Age 16 Yrs., Sacha Sauda event – Guru Nanak feeds the Hungry.	Chuharkhana, now Farooqabad
	Age 16 ½ Yrs., Mysterious illness grips Guru Nanak.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1486	Age 17 Yrs., Guru Nanak is sent to live with his elder sister Bibi Nanki in Sultanpur.	Sultanpur Lodhi
Sept. 24, 1487	Age 18 ½ Yrs., Marriage of Guru Nanak to Bibi Sulakhni.	Pakhoke / Batala
1488	Age 20 Yrs., Guru Nanak starts employment with Daulat Khan Lodhi as Store Keeper.	Sultanpur Lodhi
1489	Death of Bahlul Khan Lodhi, Sikandar Lodhi becomes new Sultan of Delhi Sultanate.	Delhi

Oct. 21, 1492	Age of Discovery – American Continent discovered by Christopher Columbus.	San Salvador Islands (the Bahamas)
Sept. 8, 1494	Birth of Guru Nanak's First son, Sri Chand	Sultanpur Lodhi
Feb. 12, 1497	Birth of Guru Nanak's Second son, Lakhmi Chand	Sultanpur Lodhi
May 20, 1498	Age of Discovery - Portuguese explorer Vasco de Gama reaches India by a Sea Route	Calicut and Goa, West coast India
1499	'Drowning incident' at River 'Kali Bein' and his 'Devine Call'.	Sultanpur Lodhi
1500 to 1506	First Udasi (Journey), North Eastern India, Assam.	From Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
	Discourse with Malik Bhago in Saidpur.	Saidpur (Emenabad)
	Discourse with Sajjan the Assassin in Tulamba (near Multan)	Tulamba
	'Watering fields' incident in Ganges River at Haridwar. Discourse with Brahmins Pundits.	Haridwar
1506 to 1514	Second Udasi (Journey), Central and South India and Ceylon	From Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1511	Meeting with Turkish Sultan Beyzeid-11.	Ajmer Dargah in Rajasthan
1512	Discourse with Kauda Bheel at the 'Forest of Bheels' in a village in Andhra Pardesh.	Kudapa village about 70 km from Vijayawada in the Andhra Pardesh
1513	Discourse with Raja Shivnabh of Sangla-deep (Ceylon).	Ceylon (Sri Lanka)
1515	Death of Guru Nanak's sister Bibi Nanki.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1515	Death of Rai Bular.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1515 to 1518	Third Udasi (Journey), Northern India, Himalayas,	From Rai

	Ladakh and Tibet.	Bhoe Di Talwandi
1517	Sikandar Lodhi dies and his son Ibrahim Lodhi becomes new Sultan of Delhi Sultanate	Delhi
1518 - 1521	Fourth Udasi (Journey), Middle-East, Mecca and Central Asia.	From Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
1521	Arrives in Hasan Abdal – Meeting with Shah Wali Qandhari.	Hasan Abdal
Dec. 24, 1522	Death of Guru Nanak's father Mehta Kalu.	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi
April 21, 1526	Zahir-ud-din Babur's invasion and battle of Panipat. Start of the Mughal Empire in India.	Panipat
	Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi's death in battle in battle in Panipat.	Panipat
	Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi's death. He died en route to prison in Bhera (Sargodha).	Bhera (Sargodha)
1526	Guru Nanak is 57 years old and is imprisoned in Saidpur by the Mughal Army.	Saidpur
1527	Guru Nanak settles in Kartarpur with his family	Kartarpur
Dec. 26, 1530	Mughal Emperor Zahir-ud-din Babur dies and his 22 years old son Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Humayun becomes Emperor.	Delhi
Sept. 17, 1539	Guru Nanak appoints his successor. Neither his elder son, Siri Chand, nor his younger merchant son Lakhmi Das, met with Guru Nanak's criteria, instead, Guru Nanak selected his devoted disciple Bhai Lehna, who he renamed **Guru Angadas.**	Kartarpur
Sept. 22, 1539	**Guru Nanak** dies of natural causes at the age of 70 years.	Kartarpur
May 17, 1540	Mughal Emperor Humayun and his brothers Askari and Hindal defeated by Sher Shah Suri at the battle of Kannauj (200 Km East of Agra). Humayun goes into exile. Sher Shah Suri becomes Emperor of India.	Kannauj, Agra
Mar 26, 1552	**Guru Amar Das** becomes the 3rd Guru.	Kartarpur
Mar, 29 1552	The **2nd Guru Angadas** dies on 29 March, 1552 at age 48 years.	Kartarpur
June 22, 1555	Humayun re-establishes the Mughal Empire in India with the decisive victory over Sikandar Shah Suri at	Sirhind-Fatehgarh, Indian state

	the Battle of Sirhind.	of Punjab.
Jan 24, 1556	On 24 January 1556, Humayun, with his arms full of books accidently falls while descending a staircase and injures himself. He died three days later at age 47.	
Feb. 11, 1556	Akbar succeeded his father, Humayun, under a regent, Bairam Khan at age 14. Bairam Khan helps Emperor Akbar expand and consolidate Mughal domains in India.	
Sept. 1, 1574	Guru Amar Das dies at the age of 95 years. **Guru Ram Das** succeeds him as 4th Sikh Guru.	Ramdaspur or Chak Ramdas.
1576	**Sri Chand** (1494–1643), the eldest son of Guru Nanak and **Minas Prithi Chand** - the eldest son of Guru Ram Das (the 4th Guru) start the **Udasi religious sect** of ascetic sadhus centered in northern India.	Ramdaspur or Chak Ramdas
1577	Amritsar (formerly Chak Ramdas) founded by Guru Ram Das on a site granted by the 3rd Mughal emperor Akbar.	Amritsar, India
Sept. 1, 1581	Guru Ram Das, the 4th Guru dies at age 46 of natural causes. He is succeeded by **Guru Arjan**, the 5th Guru.	Amritsar, India
1590	**Guru Arjan**, the 5th Guru visits Talwandi and discovers 'Kalu Da Kotha' (House of Metha Kalu where Guru Nanak was born)	Rai Bhoe Di Talwandi (Nankana Sahib)
Oct. 27, 1605	Mughal Emperor Akbar dies on Oct. 27, 1605 at age 63.	
Nov. 24 1605	Akbar's son Jehangir, from his Hindu wife Jodha Bai, becomes the 4th Mughal Emperor at age 46 on Nov. 24 1605.	
May 25, 1606	**Guru Arjan** is arrested under the orders of the Mughal Emperor Jehangir and he dies in custody. He was 43 years old.	Lahore, Pakistan
May 25, 1606	**Guru Hargobind** succeeds as 6th Sikh Guru.	
1608	The British arrive in India. Mughal Emperor Jehangir gives permission to Captain William Hawkins of the East India Company to establish facilities in Surat (Gujrat province) for the purpose of trade.	Surat (in the Gujrat province)
1609	The Miharvan sect emerges. They followed Baba Prithi Chand (1558 – 1618), the eldest son of Guru Ram Das after the younger brother Guru Arjan was officially made the next Guru. They were called	

	Minas by the orthodox Sikhs, a derogatory term meaning "scoundrels". An alternate non-derogatory term for them has been the Miharvan Sikhs, after the son of Prithi Chand. This sect was shunned by orthodox Sikhs, declared by Guru Gobind Singh as one of the five 'Panj Mel' that a Sikh must avoid.	
1615	Sir Thomas Roe is sent by Emperor James-I of England to Jehangir's court for more trade concessions. British establish more factories on the Western coast of India.	Surat (in the Gujrat province)
1621	6th Guru, **Guru Hargobind** visits Talwandi.	Talwandi (Nankana Sahib)
Oct. 28, 1627	Jehangir died on the journey from Kashmir to Lahore, near Sarai Saadabad in Bhimber on Oct. 28, 1627 at age 58.	
Feb. 14, 1628	Prince Khurram (future Shahiahan), the third son of Emperor Jehangir, becomes the 5th Mughal Emperor on 14 Feb. 1628 at age 36. His father considered him his favorite. In 1622, Khurram murdered his blind older brother, Khusrau Mirza, in order to smooth his own path to the throne. After Jehangir's death in late 1627, a war of succession ensued, Shahjahan emerged victorious. He put to death his remaining two brothers and crowned himself emperor.	Agra
Feb. 28 , 1644	Death of **Guru Hargobind** at age 48 from natural causes.	Amritsar
Mar 8, 1644	**Guru Har Rai** became the 7th Sikh leader at age 14 after the death of his grandfather and 6th Sikh leader Guru Hargobind.	Amritsar
1657-58	Dara Shikoh (the first son from Shahjahan's favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal for whom he built the Taj Mahal) is sheltered by the 7th Guru, Guru Har Rai. Dara Shikoh was favored as a successor by his father as he was a liberal-minded and an unorthodox Muslim as opposed to Aurangzeb.	
	Mughal Emperor Shahjahan becomes seriously ill in 1658. His eldest son and heir-apparent, Dara Shikoh (assumed the role of regent in his father's stead. This started the animosity between Dara Shikoh and his younger brother Aurangzeb which led to the war of succession between them.	
June 13, 1659	Aurangzeb crowns himself as the 6th Mughal Emperor on 13 June 1659 at Shalimar Bagh, Delhi. He is 41 yrs.	

Aug. 30 1659	Dara Shikoh loses to Aurangzeb in a bitter struggle for the Mughal Imperial Throne. He is executed in 1659 on Aurangzeb's orders.	
	Guru Har Rai is persecuted by Emperor Aurangzeb with charges of anti-Islamic blasphemy.	
Oct 6, 1661	**Guru Har Rai** dies at a young age of 31 of natural causes on Oct. 6, 1661.	
	Guru Har Krishan becomes the 8th Guru at age 5 succeeding his father **Guru Har Rai.**	Amritsar
Mar 30, 1664	**Guru Har Krishan** dies at age 8 of smallpox which he contracted while healing the sick people during an epidemic.	Amritsar
Aug, 20 1664	**Guru Tegh Bahadur** becomes the 9th Sikh Guru. He Opposes the forced conversions of Hindu Kashmiri Pundits by Mughals. He is imprisoned and executed under orders of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb on Nov. 11, 1675 at the age of 54.	Chandni Chowk, Delhi, India.
Jan. 22, 1666	Emperor Shahjahan fully recovered from his illness, but Aurangzeb declared him incompetent to rule and put him under house arrest in Agra Fort. Shah Jahan died on 22 January 1666 at age 74.	
Nov. 11, 1675	**Guru Gobind Singh,** the son of Guru Tegh Bahadur becomes the 10th Guru of the Sikhs at age 9 upon the death of his father.	Amritsar
Mar. 30, 1699	Founding of Khalsa by 10th tenth Guru of Sikhism, **Guru Gobind Singh** in Anandpur (in Rupnagar district (Ropar) on the edge of Shivalik Hills near Sutlej River.	Anandpur (in Indian Punjab)
Dec. 7, 1704	Sahibzada Ajit Singh, the eldest son of Guru Gobind Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, his younger brother were both martyred during the Second Battle of Chamkaur.	
Dec. 26, 1704	Sahibzada Fateh Singh and Sahibzada Zorawar Singh, 9- and 7-year-old sons of Guru Gobind Singh, were murdered by the governor of Sirhind, Wazir Khan.	
Jan. 5, 1705	Bhai Daya Singh handed over the 'Zafarnama' Letter written by Guru Gobind Singh to the Emperor Aurangzeb on Jan. 5, 1705 (last day of Ramdaan).	
Mar. 3, 1707	Death of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707 AD at age 88. After his death, the Mughal Empire fell apart and declined in its ability to tax or govern most of the subcontinent.	

June 15, 1707	Aurangzeb's 4th son, Bahadur Shah Zafar-I crowned himself Mughal Emperor after defeating his other brothers in one of the bloodiest wars of succession. He is 64 years old when he assumed the throne.	Dehli
1708	The first Sarbat Khalsa was called by the tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh before his death in 1708 and the tradition of calling Sarbat Khalsa has continued ever since at times of hardship or conflict.	
Oct. 7, 1708	**Guru Gobind Singh** dies of complications from stab wounds by Afghan assassins of Mughal governor Wazir Khan of Sirhind. He was 41 years old. The Guruship of the Sikhs passes to the **Guru Granth Sahib Holy Book** (as Final and last, eternal living guru). There would be no Guru in 'Human Form' after **Guru Gobind Singh's** death.	Deccan area of India (near river Godavari)
May, 1710	Banda Singh Bahadur captured Wazir Khan in Sirhind city in the Battle of Chappar Chiri in May of 1710 and executed him in revenge for the deaths of Guru Gobind Singh's sons and Pir Budhu Shah after the Sikh victory at Sirhind.	
Feb. 27, 1712	In 1710, Bahadur Shah -I becomes mentally ill after failing to capture a military leader under Guru Gobind Singh, Banda Singh Bahadur at the fort Lohgarh. Bahadur Shah Zafar-I died two years later on Feb. 27, 1712 at age 68.	Lahore
1712	**Rise of the Sayyid Brothers** – The brothers **(Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan** and **Sayyid Hassan Ali Khan Barha)** claimed to belong to the family of Sayyids or the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad though his daughter Fatima and son-in-law and cousin Ali. The Sayyid Brothers became highly influential in the Mughal Court during and after Aurangzeb's death and became 'King Makers' during the anarchy following the death of emperor Aurangzeb in 1707. They created and dethroned Mughal Emperors at their will after Bahadur Shah's death.	
1712	**Bandai Khalsa sect** movement started by followers of **Baba Banda Singh Bahadur**, a military leader under Guru Gobind Singh. They install **Banda Singh Bahadur** as the 11th Guru, after Guru Gobind Singh.	
1716	Formation of the first of the Sikh misls from 'Jathas' which will eventually grow to 12 misls forming the 'Sikh Confederation' in Punjab.	
1716	**Banda Singh Bahadur** is captured by Mughal Emperor Farrukhsiyar (grandson of emperor Bahadur	Delhi

	Shah-I) and he is executed in Delhi.	
Jan. 1719	In Jan. 1719, the **Sayyid Brothers** blinded, deposed and murdered Farrukhsiyar. They then arranged for his first cousin, Rafi ud-Darajat, to be the next ruler in Feb. 1719.	
June. 1719	Rafi ud-Darajat died of lung disease in June of 1719 and the **Sayyid Brothers** made his elder brother, Rafi ud-Daulah the Emperor.	
Sept. 1719	Rafi ud-Daulah also died of lung disease in Sept. 1719. The **Sayyid Brothers** crowned Muhammad Shah at the age of seventeen with the Sayyid Brothers as his regents until 1720.	
1721	Followers of **Banda Singh Bahadur** and **Bandai Khalsa** sect are expelled from the Sikh Panth by the Tatt Khalsa (True Sikhs) in 1721.	
1722	Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah arranged for the Syed brothers to be killed with the help of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah to take back control of his rule. **Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan** was killed at Fatehpur Sikri in 1720, and **Sayyid Hassan Ali Khan Barha** was fatally poisoned in 1722.	
1723	The next known meeting of the Sarbat Khalsa took place in 1723 (on the occasion of Divali) when a clash between Tat Khalsa and the Bandais (followers of Banda Singh Bahadur) was averted and amicably settled through the intervention and wise counsel of Bhai Mani Singh.	
1733	In 1733, the Mughal government decided, at the insistence of Zakariya Khan, viceroy of Lahore, to revoke all repressive measures issued against the Sikhs and made an offer of a grant to them with a Jagir consisting of the three parganas of Dipalpur, Kanganval and Jhabal and the title of 'Nawab' conferred upon their leader. At the Sarbat Khalsa of 1733, the Sikhs accepted the offer. **Kapur Singh** was unanimously elected as the leader and chosen for the title. He was reluctant, but could not deny the unanimous will of the Sikh community.	
Feb. 13, 1739	In 1739, Nader Shah Afshar, the Persian Emperor (Shah of Iran) invaded India and crushed the Mughal army in less than three hours at the huge Battle of Karnal on Feb. 13 1739.	
1745-1746	The Sikh holocaust of 1745-1746 (also called Chhota Ghallughara in Punjabi for "Smaller Massacre") took	

	place on the orders of Zakariya Khan Bahadur, the Mughal Viceroy of Lahore. Thousands of Sikh men, women and children and their Muslim sympathizers were murdered.	
1745	Under a gurmata of the Sarbat Khalsa on Oct. 14, 1745, the active fighting force of the Sikhs was reorganized into 25 jathas (bands) of about 100 each.	
1748	In 1748, Mir Mannu (Mu'in ul-Mulk) became governor of Lahore and the surrounding provinces through his exploits in battle against the Afghan army. Barbarity of Mir Mannu is unprecedented as he led a mass genocide of Sikhs under his very tyrannical and oppressive regime.	
March 29, 1748	A further reorganization into 11 misls (divisions) forming the Dal Khalsa was made by the Sarbat Khalsa on Baisakhi (March 29, 1748). Thus, Sarbat Khalsa became the central body of 'Sikh theocratic Confederate'. In this Sarbat Khalsa, Nawab Kapur Singh appointed **Jassa Singh Ahluwalia** as his successor. His followers further awarded him the title Sultan-ul-Qaum (King of the Nation).	
1748	In 1748, Ahmad Shah Durrani (Abdali) of the Durrani clan invaded the Mughal Empire. He subsequently raided India eight more times.	
1752	In March 1752, Mir Mannu surrendered Lahore to Ahmad Shah Abdali. A year later Mir Mannu died.	
Nov. 7, 1760	Sikh Sarbat Khalsa passes Gurmata to attack Lahore on November 7, 1760.	
1762 - 1767	In 1762, Ahmed Shah Abdali invaded India once again and plundered the Punjab treasury, destroyed Harimandir Sahib (Golden Temple) and massacred thousands of Sikhs. In Sikh history, this massacre is called the 'Vadda Ghallughara'. For the next few years, Ahmed Shah Abdali and the Sikhs battled for control of Punjab.	
1764	In 1764, Sultan Jassa Singh Ahluwalia collected donations and rebuild the Golden Temple.	
1772	Jassa Singh Ahluwalia founded Kapurthala State.	
1773	Ahmed Shah Abdali dies and his son Timur Shah is unable to suppress the Sikhs.	
1763 - 1774	Charat Singh Sukerchakia, Misldar of Sukerchakia Army established himself in Gujranwala.	

Nov. 13, 1780	Birth of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.	Gujranwala
1784	The Pitt's India Act gives the British Govt. effective control of the private British East India Company.	
1799	Ranjit Singh captures Lahore from Zaman Shah Durrani. Rise of the Sikh Empire starts with all 12 Sikh misls consolidated and united under Ranjit Singh.	Lahore
1799 - 1801	Transition period for the Sikh state. It is neither a 'Confederacy' nor an 'Empire'. The Sikh state is in revolution or anarchy.	
April 12, 1801	Ranjit Singh is proclaimed 'Maharaja of Punjab' at age 21.	Lahore
June, 1818	Maharaja Ranjit Singh captures Multan after defeating Nawab Muzzafar Khan effectively ending the Afghan Pathan rule in Punjab.	Multan
Sept. 1818	Maharaja Ranjit Singh visits Talwandi and officially renames it to 'Nankana Sahib' – or 'Nanak Da Aana' – (Nanak's arrival).	Nankana Sahib
March 1819	Gurdwara Janamashtan is rebuilt and expanded under orders of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.	Nankana Sahib
Aug. 1819	Gurdwara Patti Sahib, Gurdwara Kiara Sahib, Gurdwara Mal Ji Sahib, and Gurdwara Bal Lila are built under orders of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.	Nankana Sahib
June 27, 1839	Death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of natural causes the age 58 years.	Lahore
	Maharaja Kharak Singh succeeds his father Ranjit Singh to the Lahore Throne in June 1839.	Lahore
Nov. 5, 1840	Maharaja Kharak Singh is poisoned with white lead and mercury. Within 6 months he was bedridden, and dies 11 months after the poisoning at age 39 years. (At his funeral, 3 of his wives committed Sati, along with 11 slave girls).	Lahore
Nov. 6, 1840	Maharaja Nau Nihal Singh succeeds to the throne. He dies just one day after his father's death of head injuries from a large rock that fell on him when passing through Roshnai Darwaza (the gate of the Hazuri Bagh at Lahore Fort). He was returning from his father's funeral.	Lahore
	Maharani Chand Kaur, the wife of Maharaja Kharak Singh and mother of Nau Nihal Singh, becomes regent of the Sikh Empire (Nov. 5, 1840 to Jan. 18, 1841) as **Sahib Kaur**, the wife of her only son Nau	Lahore

	Nihal Singh was carrying his unborn child.	
Jan. 18, 1841	Maharani Chand Kaur abandons her claim to the throne when Nau Nihal Singh's widow, **Sahib Kaur** delivered a stillborn son.	Lahore
Jan. 27, 1841	Maharaja Sher Singh, a son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and step brother of Kharak Singh (Nau Nihal Singh's father) becomes Maharaja of the Sikh Empire after the sudden death of Nau Nihal Singh.	Lahore
June 11, 1842	Maharani Chand Kaur is battered to death by her servants on 11 June 1842 as she was seen as a threat by her enemies.	Lahore
Sept. 15, 1843	Maharaja Sher Singh is killed by his trusted cousin Ajit Singh Sandhawalia. Sher Singh only had time to utter, "what treachery." The Sandhawalias also murdered Raja Dhian Singh Dogra, the loyal Prime Minister (Wazir) of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.	Lahore
Sept. 15, 1843	Maharaja Duleep Singh, the youngest son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the only child of Maharani Jind Kaur is placed in power in Sept, 1843, at the age of five, with his mother ruling on his behalf. Hira Singh Dogra, son of Raja Dhian Singh Dogra is appointed as his Wazir.	Lahore
Sept. 1844	Duleep Singh's step brothers, Pashaura Singh and Kashmira Singh start a rebellion against Duleep Singh and Maharani Jind Kaur.	
Dec. 21, 1844	The Wazir, Hira Singh Dogra attacks Baba Bir Singh's Dera at Naurarigabad in Tarn Taran where Pashaura Singh and Kashmira Singh are taking refuge. Baba Bir Singh forbade his Sikhs to fight back saying, "How can we attack our own brethren?" He was in meditation and had the Holy Book when he was killed with a shell from the besiegers. Prince Kashmira Singh also lost his life. The Sikh troops did not forgive Hira Singh for forcing them into an action which led to the death of a holy man. They killed him and his advisers, Pandit Jalla and Gulab Singh's youngest brother.	
Sept. 11, 1845	Jawahar Singh crushes the rebellion against his sister and Duleep Singh. Pashaura Singh surrenders and is taken to Attock where he was strangled to death.	
Sept. 21, 1845	The Sikh army is infuriated by this cruel act of Jawahar Singh and he is speared to death outside the	

	Lahore Fort by the Sikh army on Sept. 21, 1845 in front of his sister, Maharani Jind Kaur.	
1845	The first Sikh-Anglo War from 1845-1846. The Sikhs were betrayed by their Generals Lal Singh and Gen. Tej Singh. In March, the Treaty of Lahore was signed, assuring the British over-lordship over the affairs of the Lahore Durbar and partial subjugation of the Sikh kingdom and cession of Jammu and Kashmir as a separate princely state under British suzerainty.	
1847	The Treaty of Amritsar frees Maharaja Gulab Singh Jamwal, the founder of royal Dogra dynasty, from all obligations towards the Sikhs and the British make him the Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir. The Dogras' loyalty came in handy to the British during the revolt of 1857 which challenged British rule in India.	
1848	The second Sikh-Anglo War started due to a small incident in Multan which provided the British with an excuse.	
Mar. 12, 1849	The Sikh army surrenders and the Punjab is annexed by the British.	
Mar. 29, 1849	Maharaja Duleep Singh is deposed and placed under British guardianship.	
May 1854	Maharaja Duleep Singh is sent into exile in Britain at age 15 Yrs. He is made to accept Christianity.	
April 1857	The War of Independence (or The Indian Rebellion of 1857 as the British called it) was a major, but ultimately unsuccessful, uprising in India in 1857–58 against the rule of the British East India Company, which functioned as a sovereign power on behalf of the British Crown. After the war, the British crown took over the rule directly.	Meerut
1872	Outbreak and violent suppression of the 'Kooka uprising' (Kuka uprising) inspired by Balak Singh (revolting Sikhs from the Namdhari sect threatened British colonial authority).	
1873	The Sikhs in Amritsar form the Sanatan Singh Sabha. It included Udasis, Nirmalas and Namdharis. (Sanatan means 'eternal', synonymous with Hinduism).	Amritsar
1879	Tatt Khalsa ('True Khalsa') Singh Sabha is founded in Lahore (Pakistan) to rival the earlier Sanatan Singh Sabha based in Amritsar. The Tatt Khalsa challenged and eventually marginalized Sanatan Singh Sabha.	Lahore

Oct. 22, 1893	The last of the Sikh Emperor, Maharaja Duleep Singh dies in Paris at the age of 55.	
1909	Bhai Gurmukh Singh and Bhai Kanh Singh cooperate with Max Arthur MacAuliffe, a divisional judge, to undertake the translation of Granth Sahib (completed in 1909).	
April 13 , 1919	The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, (Amritsar massacre). Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer orders British Indian Army to shoot into a crowd of unarmed civilians in Jallianwala Bagh killing at least 500 men, women and children. Over 1,000 were injured.	Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, Punjab
Feb. 20, 1921	The Nankana massacre (or Saka Nankana) of Sikhs by Mahant Narayan Das took place in Nankana Sahib Gurdwara Janamashtan. 400 Sikh men, women and children lost their lives.	Nankana Sahib
March 3, 1921	Mahatma Gandhi visited Nankana Sahib.	Nankana
1922	Bhai Pheru Morcha takes place –Mahant Kishan Das and his tenant Pala Ram (brother of Mahant Narain Das the Mahant of Sri Nankana Sahib) give up control over Gurdwara Sangat Sahib to Sikh Committee.	Bhai Pheru, Pakistan
1925	The Sikh Gurdwara Reform Act, 1925 defined the term "Sikh" and excluded the syncretic groups like the Udasis, the Nanakpanthis and Sanatanis. Subsequently, the Udasis increasingly identified themselves as Hindus rather than Sikhs.	Amritsar
1926	Bhai Kanh Singh of Nabha, a notable scholar, finished compilation of **'Mahan Kosh'** (encyclopedia of Sikhism) and **'Ham Hindu Nahin'** (We are not Hindus) after 14 years of research.	
April 13, 1978	1978 Sikh – Nirankari clashes. Violent clashes occurred at Amritsar between the traditional Sikhs and the Neo Sant Nirankari Mission (Nakali Niranjari) also called 'Nakali Sikhs'.	Amritsar
June 6, 1984	Attack by Indian Army on the Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar and on several other Gurdwaras throughout Punjab on orders of Indian Government on June 6th 1984. Several hundred Sikhs were martyred (shaheed) and thousand injured including innocent men, women and children.	Amritsar
Nov. 12, 2019	Guru Nanak's 550th Anniversary is celebrated.	Worldwide

Timeline Of The Mughal Dynasty

Babur (1526- 1530 AD)	- Founder of Mughal Empire. - Introduced gun powder in India. - Defeated Ibrahim Lodhi in the first Battle of Panipat (1527 AD). - Defeated Rana Sanga (Sangram Singh) at the Battle of Khanwa (1527 AD). - Defeated Medini Rai of Chanderi at the Battle of Chanderi (1528 AD). - Wrote Tuzuk-i-Babri in Turkish.
Humayun (1526- 1556 AD)	- Made Dinpanah at Delhi as second capital. - Fought two battles with **Sher Shah Suri** - Battle of Chausa (1539 AD); Battle of Kannauj (1540 AD) and was defeated. - Died due to fall from his library building's stairs in 1556 AD. - His half-sister Gulbadan Begum wrote **'Humayun-Nama'.**
Akbar (1566- 1565 AD)	- Introduced Mansabdari System (Holder of rank) to organise the nobility and army. - Abolished Jaziyah (1564 AD); Believed in Sulh-i-kul (Peace to all). - Issued "Degree of Infallibility " in 1579. - Formulated religious order Din-i-Illahi (1582 AD). - Nine Gems of His Court (Navratnas): Mahesh Das Birbal aka Birbal), Tanna Mishra aka Tansen, Faizi, Maharaja Man Singh, Fakir Aziao din, Mirza Aziz Koka, Todar Mal, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-khanaa and Abul Fazl. **Note:** There is ambiguity on whether Mullah-do-Pyaza was one of the nine gems of Akbar. Some sources states that it was fictional character and some says advisor of Akbar. - He married **Hindu Princess Hira Kunwari** (aka Harkha Bai aka Jodha Bai) daughter of Raja Bharmal of Amber. She gave birth to Prince Salim (the future Emperor Jahangir).

Jahangir (1605-1627 AD)	- Established Zanjir-i-Adal at Agra Fort for the seeker of royal justice. - Captain Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe visited in his court. - Abdul Hassan, Ustad Mansur and Bishandas were the famous painters of his court. - He had several Hindu wives. One was his Hindu cousin **Rajkumari Man Bai**, daughter of Bhagwant Das of Amber. Bhagwant Das, was the son of Raja Bharmal and the brother of Akbar's Hindu wife and Jahangir's mother Jodha Bai. Another **Hindu wife was Karamnasi Begum**, daughter of Raja Kesho Das Rathore of Mertia. He then married a **Hindu Koka Kumari Begum**, eldest daughter of Jagat Singh, Yuvraj of Amber. Jahangir also married another **Hindu Rajput Princess, Jagat Gosain Begum (aka Manmati Bai).** Jagat Gosain gave birth to Prince Khurram (the future Shah Jahan), who was Jahangir's successor to the throne. - Jahangir was deeply influenced by Hindu Elites and it is they who misguided him to executed Sikh fifth Guru, Guru Arjun Dev.
Shahjahan (1628-1658 AD)	- Two Frenchmen, Bernier and Tavernier and Italian adventurer Manucci visited his court. - Built Moti Masjid and Taj Mahal at Agra, Jama Masjid and Red Fort at Delhi. - Annexed Ahmadnagar while Bijapur and Golconda accepted his lordship.
Aurangzeb (1658-1707 AD)	- He claimed to be a scholar of Islamic theology and jurisprudence. He appointed a board of Ulema to compile authoritative passages from the standard of Hanafi Fiqh (Fatawa-ul- Alamgiri) for the guidance of the qazis known as 'Fatawat-i-Alamgiri' which was completed in AD 1672. - He had ninth Sikh Guru, Guru Tegh Bhadur executed in 1675 AD. - He forbade Sati Pratha.

	- Built 'Biwi ka Makbara on the tomb of his queen Rabaud-Durani at Aurangabad; Moti Masjid in Red Fort at Delhi; Jami or Badshahi Mosque at Lahore. Emperor Aurangzeb had **two Hindu wives**-one a Rajput named **Udaipuri** and another **Nawab Bai**. Udaipuri was so much in love with the sixth Mughal emperor that she had expressed her wish to perform 'Sati' if Aurangzeb died before she did - defying Aurangzeb's orders.
Bahadur Shah-I (1707-1712 AD)	- Popularly known as Shah Alam-I and called Shahi-i- Bekhabar by Khafi Khan due to his appeasement parties by grants of title and rewards. - Ascended himself on the throne in 1707 after killing his two brothers, and defeating Kam Baksh in the Battle of Jajau. - He was the last Mughal who enjoyed all the authority in real term. - Granted the right to collect Sardesh Mukhi of Deccan but not Chauth (one fourth) to the Marathas.
Jahandar Shah (1712-1713 AD)	- Gave the title of 'Mirza Raja' to Jai Singh of Malwa and 'Maharaja' to Ajit Singh of Marwar. - Encouraged Ijara System (the revenue farming/ contract farming and abolished Jazia). - He was killed while in captivity by Sayyid brothers, Abdulllah Khan and Hussain Ali. - His mother was **Nizam Bai, a Hindu Princess.** - His third wife was **Anup Bai** and fourth **Lal Kunwar, a Hindu dancing girl.**
Farrukhsiyar (1713-1719 AD)	- Known as 'Sahid-i-Mazlum' and son of Azim-us-Shah. - Assigned the duty of Deccan's governor to Chin Quilch Khan who was better known 'Nizam-ul-Mulk', later who laid the foundation of independent state of Hyderabad. - Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath visited in his court to take grant for collecting **Chauth** (or one fourth) and Sardesh Mukhi on Maratha land. The term

	'Chaudhry' originated from 'Chauth' or the collector of 'one fourth'.
Muhammad Shah (1719- 1748 AD)	- His full name was Roshan Akhtar (called Rangila). - The Marathas under Baji Rao raided Delhi for the first time in Mughal history. - Nadir Shah of Persia invaded with the help of Sadat Khan who defeated Mughal army at the Battle of Karnal. - He married **Udham Bai, a Hindu Princess** who gave birth to Prince Mirza Ahmad Shah Bahadur. She was an administrator and served as de facto regent of India from 1748 to 1754.)
Mirza Ahmed Shah Bahadur (1748- 1754 AD)	- The former general of Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India five times during Mirza Ahmad Shah's reign. - He was overthrone by his wazir Imad-ul Malik who placed Alamgir-II as ruler.
Alamgir-II (1754- 1759 AD)	- Called 'Azizuddin'. - During his reign, the Battle of Plassey took place. - He was overthrone by his wazir Imad-ul Malik who placed Shah Alam-II as ruler. - His mother was **Anup Bhai, a Hindu Princess**
Shah Alam-II (1759- 1806 AD)	- Popularly known as 'Ali Gauhar' who was defeated in the Battle of Buxar in 1764 AD. - During his reign, the third Battle of Panipat took place. - Gave all his Diwani rights of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa until 1772 but after 1772 with the help of Mahaji Scindia, he took those back. - His mother was **Kunar Bai, a Hindu Princess** - He was the first Mughal ruler to become British East India Company Pensioner.
Akbar-II (1806- 1837 AD)	- First Mughal ruler who was under the British protection. - During his tenure, Mughal Empire shrinks to the Red Fort only.

Bahadur Shah-II 1837- 1857 AD)	- He was the son of Akbar-II and his **Hindu Rajput wife Lal Bai** and also was the last ruler Mughal Empire. - During his reign, 1857 revolt took place; he was sent to Rangoon as captive where he died in 1862. - He was very good Urdu poet and his pen name was Zafar. - He was the last of the Mughal Emperor's. The Dynasty ended after him.

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POSTFACE

There are many human races, ethnic groups and religions on our planet "Spaceship Earth". Religion, which should have taught people to treat all human beings as equal, has generally acted as a divisive force. This was the situation in the Indian sub-continent in the 15th century and this is the same situation in Indian sub-continent in the 21st century. Nothing much has changed except the population has grown 15 fold (10 fold globally but 15 times in the Indian Sub-Continent).

In the 15th century, there was no Television, Internet, or any other form of 'Instant Mass Media" where a message could be delivered universally. Guru Nanak had to travel by foot 18,000 miles all over the world for a period of 20 years to tell humans that we are all children of the same God – The single God of all humanity; we can love Him by any name, Allah, God, Ram or whichever name we prefer. There are no creatures anywhere that belong to any other or lesser God. He declared if all believe in one God then spiritual unity can be achieved even if the way of worship is different. Unity, peace and harmony among all humans is but natural – as humans only know love at birth. Hatred is a trait that is taught in homes, schools, society and mass gatherings and is not natural.

As our collective knowledge has grown over the centuries, we have learned that our being is only a part of the universe, and a small part at that. We are nodes in a network of informal and formal exchanges around dining tables, play grounds, classrooms, religious institutions (Church's, Mosque's, Synagogue's, Mandir's), Political Rally's, Media Anchor's, Breaking News etc.) through which we pass information, knowledge, images, tools and form narratives for the next generation. We pass on the world that we build - and that is the world that future generations inherit.

Our world cannot exist without giving the highest priority to preserving humanity first. We are truly at a tipping point. I wish to emphasize that in a world of nuclear armed nations, if we continue on a path of hate that promotes conflicts over religion, ethnic and economic interests, we will lose our entire human race. The Planet will still be around for as long as the sun keeps converting Hydrogen to Helium and giving energy.

But some other species will enjoy the Sun's energy for the next 4.5 Billion years – not humans. Humans are here as part of the existence and not against the existence. Humans may think we are superior – but nature does not think so. If bees, butterflies and insects die, all humans will die within 2-4 years and all life will seize to exist. But if all humans die, nature will still flourish – in fact humans will make good manure and fertilizer for new trees, plants and flowers. Life without humans will certainly flourish – as it has for millions of years. Humans are not the most significant creatures - we are not the center of the cosmos. The cosmos won't care if we survive or not.

In Sept. 2019, most leaders of the world gathered in the annual UN General Assembly. Sadly few spoke of the clear and present threats to mankind and human life on our planet. Pakistan's leader however very boldly delivered strong message of peace on the Global Forum. He said that our world cannot exist without giving the highest priority to preserving humanity first. He emphasized that in a world of nuclear armed nations, if we continue on a path of hate that promotes conflicts over religion, ethnic and economic interests, we will all perish. The magnificent gift of the Electromagnetic Spectrum allows those in a position of power and influence to broadcast messages of peace, harmony, selflessness, compassion, co-existence and piety all over the globe. They don't have to travel on foot like Guru Nanak had to 500 years ago. It is so easy now to reach billions of people all over the world in a matter of minutes.

I would like to conclude my message by quoting a paragraph from a human being I greatly admire – Stephen Hawking. He was an astonishing scientist and a remarkable and courageous man who had led the world in his field of science despite his devastating disability.
I first met him in 1975 when I was a student in Los Angeles, California. He was a visiting professor at California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and he was staying at a colonial style house near the campus. There, in a non-credit extension course in the emerging field of cosmology, I first learnt of 'black-holes' and the 'theory of everything' that sparked my

life-long interest in understanding our universe. I began reading up on the theory of the 'very large', i.e. general relativity and gravity and the theory of the 'very small' i.e. quantum theory. Cosmology, creation and humanity became one of my passions that I have pursued ever since. Had Guru Nanak lived in modern times – I am certain the two would have had absolutely amazing discussions. Here is what Stephen Hawking wrote a few months before his death;

"I have led an extraordinary life on this planet, while at the same time travelling across the universe by using my mind and the laws of physics. I have been to the furthest reaches of our galaxy, travelled into a black hole and gone back to the beginning of time. On Earth, I have experienced highs and lows, turbulence and peace, success and suffering. I have been rich and poor, I have been able-bodied and disabled. I have been praised and I have been criticized, but I have never been ignored. I have been enormously privileged, through my work, in being able to contribute to our understanding of the universe. But it would be an empty universe indeed if it were not for the people I love, and who love me. Without them, the wonder of it all would be lost on me.

And at the end of all this, the fact that we humans, who are ourselves mere collections of fundamental particles of nature, have been able to come to an understanding of the laws governing us, and our universe, is a great triumph. I want to share my excitement about these big questions and my enthusiasm about this quest.

One day, I hope we will know the answers to all these questions. But there are other challenges, other big questions on the planet which must be answered, and these will also need a new generation who are interested and engaged, and have an understanding of science. How will we feed an ever-growing population? Provide clean water, generate renewable energy, prevent and cure disease and slow down global climate change? I hope that science and technology will provide the answers to these questions, but it will take people, human beings with

knowledge and understanding, to implement these solutions. Let us fight for every woman and every man to have the opportunity to live healthy, secure lives, full of opportunity and love. We are all time travelers, journeying together into the future. But let us work together to make that future a place we want to visit. Be brave, be curious, he determined, overcome the odds. It can be done."

Hate is Not a Natural Human Behavior
– It is Taught and Learnt.

Love is a Natural Human Behavior
– It is just Not Practiced Enough.

About the Author

Rai Aurangzeb Bhatti (Zeb Bhatti) is the 17th generation direct descendant of Rai Bular Bhatti, who is revered as the second person to discover the divine qualities of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith.

After receiving his early education from Lawrence College, Murree Hills and Cadet College Hasan Abdal in Pakistan, Zeb moved to Los Angeles, California (USA) in 1973 where he completed his higher education at Northrop Institute of technology. With a natural talent for computers and systems, Zeb founded an Information Technology company in Los Angeles in the early 1980's called Computerland Infosystems which was later renamed to NovaQuest Infosystems. The rapid growth in personal computers in the 1980's and the Internet in the 1990's allowed the company to grow rapidly under his leadership and NovaQuest acquired WebVision, eNom, ATMLink and other such companies in the Internet and eCommerce domain. After NovaQuest InfoSystems was sold in 2001, Zeb remained active as a consulting CTO, Sr. Advisor and Board member in Information Technology startups focusing on Blockchain, IoT, and Cloud computing in the USA as well as in Pakistan.

Like his father, the late Rai Bashir Bhatti, Zeb's passion for history and the legacy of his great ancestor, Rai Bular Bhatti pulled him back to his hometown, Nankana Sahib after his semi-retirement from business. He moved to Nankana in 2008 where he recently finished building a modern Resort and Botanical Garden on his inherited ancestral land – at the spot where Guru Nanak once lived, played and meditated. The Resort is rightly called 'Nankana Resort' and is host to many Sikh visitors from all over the world.

Zeb's enthusiasm for ICT reaches far beyond being an entrepreneur. He has dedicated countless hours to volunteering, mentoring and supporting students and teaching faculty in ICT, Cyber Security, Blockchain and other disruptive technologies. In 2019, he launched 'Nanakshahi' as the 'Seva Token' (Selfless Service Token) on Ethereum Blockchain to provide a cryptocurrency and mechanism for transparency and full accountability in funding and execution of Public Service projects.